A Complete Story by W. W. Jacobs on Page 8.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

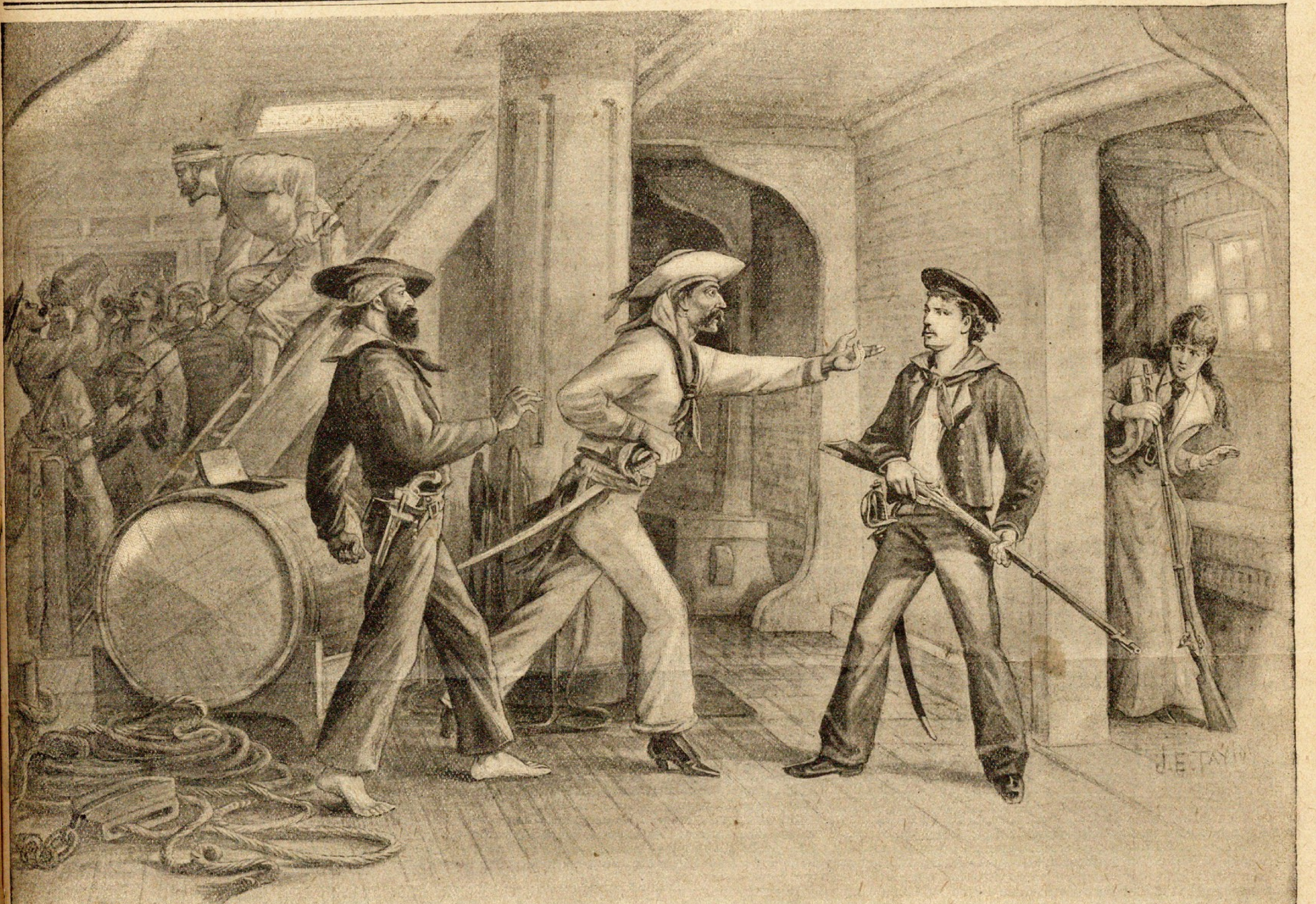
A JOURNAL OF CHOICE LITERATURE ROMANCE AND USEFUL INFORMATION

VOLUME 52. Copyright, 1896, by Robert Bonner's Sons. All Rights Reserved. NUMBER 6.

ROBERT BONNER'S SONS,
Cor. of William and Spruce Sts.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1896.

TWENTY PAGES.
Five Cents a Copy.



"MAY HEAVEN HELP US, IT IS THE 'ISABELLA' CREW!" SAID MISS MAYFIELD, AS HER EYES ENCOUNTERED THE TWO MEN.

THE ABANDONED BRIG.*

BY WILL LISENBEE.

This Story is Complete in This Number.

Contents of this Number:

PAGE
The Abandoned Brig. Illustrated. WILL LISENBEE. 1
In Search of Gold. (7th installment.) COLIN MIDDLETON. 3
Darby, the Bear-Hunter of Alaska. (12th installment.) SEWARD W. HOPKINS. 4
Willful Penelope. (11th installment.) EFFIE ADELAIDE ROWLANDS. 6
In Borrowed Plumes. W. W. JACOBS. 8
At Czarskoe Selo. SOPHIE FRIEDLAND. 9
Flowers and Children in Winter: A Poem. WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE. 9
Editorials, etc. 10
My Old-Fashioned Mother: A Poem. MARY E. TUCKER. 10
England's Army and Navy. No. 1 S. PARKES CADMAN. 10
The Dark Stranger. Illustrated. (4th installment.) JOHN R. MUSICK. 11
The First Snow Fall: A Poem. NATHAN D. URNER. 13
Children All Over the World.—Correspondence.—Science. 14
Woman's World. 14
The Ghostly Manifestations of Aunt Drusilla. Illustrated. ELIZABETH PALLEN. 16
Baby's Nap: A Poem. 17
The Plaid Lady. Illustrated. MARY KYLE DALLAS. 18

CHAPTER I.

I HAVE been asked to write out an account of my adventures while aboard the brig *Isabella*, but being just a common sailor, with little knowledge of books, and less of the writing of them, I shall simply give a plain statement of the facts, and do so in as few words as possible. To begin at the beginning, as the saying goes, I shall commence my story with the going down of the *Mary Ann*, which occurred the night of May 19th, 1847. We were seventeen days out from New York, bound for Rio, when we encountered a terrific storm, which lasted for days, and so disabled the *Mary Ann* that we were compelled to take to the boats. We had scarcely cleared the wreck when she went down. The storm had somewhat abated, but a heavy sea was running. The night was intensely dark, and the boat I was in got separated from the others, and before we knew it we were dashed upon the rocky shore of an island. Our boat was wrecked and I was the only soul that escaped. How I got ashore I never knew, for I was knocked senseless by some of the timbers of the boat as she went over, and knew no more till I found myself lying on the wet sands where the in-rolling waves had cast me.

The coming of morning showed me that I was on a small island, uninhabited by man or beast, as far as I was able to discover. Weak and hungry, my first thought was to look about me for something in the shape of food. The highest point of the island was bare, but in a small valley in its midst I found a little stream of fresh water, upon whose banks grew a scant growth of trees and bushes. Among these I found a few bananas, which I ate with great relish.

Feeling a little stronger, I took a turn about the island, which was not over a half mile in length, but there was not a living soul to be seen. I alone had escaped a watery grave. There were no animals to be seen upon the island, but birds of various kinds swarmed over the rocky headland, and were so gentle that I had little trouble in knocking several of them over with a stick. These I cooked on the sands, having found some matches in a waterproof box which I always carried. I also discovered some land-crabs --similar to those found in the West Indies—which made excellent food when roasted, and so I managed to satisfy my hunger.

Whatever was to befall me, it seemed that I was in no danger of starvation. I had little knowledge as to the location of the island, for the storm had blown the *Mary Ann* far out of her course when she went down. It might, for aught I knew, be days and weeks before I should get sight of a sail, as the island might be far out of the track of any passing ships.

Taking a part of my red flannel shirt, I made a signal flag and placed it on the highest point of the island. A feeling of loneliness and dejection came over me as I scanned the sea in every direction and caught no glimpse of any sail.

Except when asleep or preparing food, I kept a constant watch for passing ships. One evening, just at sunset, a vessel hove in sight off to windward. I was filled with intense joy at the welcome sight. I could make out very little of the strange craft, for she was only a speck against the red glow where the sun had gone down. I only had time to note that she was heading for the island, when the darkness fell and shut her from sight.

---

* Copyright, 1896, by ROBERT BONNER'S SONS. All rights reserved.

I hurried to the spot where I had set the signal flag flying and kindled a beacon light. I felt sure that this would attract the attention of those on board the vessel, and I expected that a boat would be sent ashore; but the night passed without bringing any living soul to the island.

At the first gleam of dawn I espied the strange craft lying less than a fourth of a league off the southern shore. As the light widened, I discovered that she was a brig of rather odd build. Her poles were bare, excepting a fragment of the main-stay-sail, which flapped lazily in the light breeze that was blowing from the southwest. No one could be seen aboard her, but what surprised me most was her position, for she was drifting like a log, clearly indicating that she was manned by no crew. That she was a derelict there could be no doubt. As I stood watching her, she swung around, showing the name *Isabella* printed in black letters across her stern.

I could not suppress a feeling of disappointment as I became convinced that she was an abandoned vessel; but I was determined to board her, if such a thing were possible. There might be much aboard her that would be useful to me, especially if it should prove that the deserting crew had left one of the boats behind. She was drifting slowly, and I looked every moment to see her go aground, but she came steadily on without mishap.

When she came within an eighth of a mile of the shore, I quickly threw off my outer garments and swam out to meet her. I was a strong swimmer, and had no fear but that I could easily swim twice the distance.

Before I reached her, I saw a tremor run through her rigging; then, as she careened gently to one side, I knew that she was aground. I was soon alongside, and finding the chains dangling from the davits, I quickly climbed aboard.

The boats were all gone, and as I glanced about the deck, there was no living soul to be seen. Nothing was visible above the deck to indicate that the vessel had become disabled, and she floated too buoyantly to be waterlogged. Why she had been abandoned was still a mystery.

I walked to the companion hatch, which was open, and descending, entered the cabin. A single glance sufficed to convince me that the place had been rifled. Chests, with lids broken open, were scattered here and there, and various articles of insignificant value lay in wild disorder about the cabin. In the other cabins I found the same disorder. Among the articles scattered about the room I found some suits of clothes, which had evidently belonged to the commander, and finding these of my size, I lost no time in casting off my wet garments and getting into a suit of them.

My next move was to look about for something in the shape of provisions. In one of the forward berths I discovered a kind of pantry, containing several casks, jars and boxes. In these I found a goodly quantity of sea biscuits, smoked hams, cheese, coffee, and a number of other articles of food and drink, besides a large cask of fresh water and about a gallon of pickles. This was indeed a glad sight to my hungry eyes, for it seemed to me that it had been years since I had tasted a square meal.

I cut me a liberal slice of the cheese, which I ate with some of the ship's bread, and washed down with a mug of strong wine from one of the casks. I found that this put new strength into my frame and gave me a feeling of hope and courage I had not felt since being cast upon the island.

Having satisfied my hunger, I proceeded to make a more careful inspection of the vessel. In the cabin which had doubtless been the captain's, I found a couple of muskets, a heavy cutlass with an inscription in Spanish across its hilt, a chart, a sextant, and a few books; but I could find no trace of the log-book, or any other documents that would have been likely to have thrown any light on the mystery of the deserted brig. However, the drifting of the brig to my island was a Godsend to me, and I accepted it as such. Here were provisions enough to last me a good twelve months, to say nothing of the other articles which would be useful to me.

I next took a peep into the hold and saw a number of bales and boxes, some of which had been broken open: but I did not go down. That part of the business could wait. However, I dropped a sounder into the well, and found that there were less than six inches of water in the hold.

I now returned to the deck and furled the bit of sail that the light breeze was causing to tug at the halyards. Having completed this job, I scurried aloft and swept the sea with a quick glance; but no sail was visible. Descending, I began to cast about for some plan for getting needful articles from the brig to the shore. The boats were all gone, but it would not be difficult to construct a raft which would answer my purpose. In a carpenter's chest which I found in the forecastle I discovered all the tools necessary for the work, and I set about the task at once.

The raft, as I intended to construct it, was a very simple affair, my aim being to build it out of a lot of empty water casks, on which would be spiked a flooring of stout planks. My purpose was to build it on the deck of the vessel, leaving it in sections to be lowered into the water and then lashed together. I found the task much greater than I had at first supposed it would be. The breeze went down and the heat from the sun grew intense. I rigged up a kind of awning out of a piece of sail, and by noon, as I reckoned, for I had no time-piece—nor would it have served me if I had, not knowing the position—I had got my work well under way, and might easily complete it before nightfall.

I ceased work now, and, returning to the cuddy, partook of a hearty meal, which I washed down with liberal draughts of wine. Perhaps I drank more than I intended, or the wine might have been stronger than I suspected; but be that as it may, I had barely returned to the deck when a decidedly drowsy feeling came over me. Thinking that it would soon pass away, I lay down in the shadow of the awning, intending to get up and resume my work in a half hour. But before I knew it, I fell into a sound sleep. When I awoke it was almost sunset. I got up feeling very foolish and greatly put out. I was much vexed at myself for losing so much valuable time, but as there was no mending the matter, I fell to work with a will.

I now decided to remain all night on board the brig so as to be able to begin work early on the following morning. I found a number of candles in a chest in the cuddy, and by the light of these I worked for some hours after darkness had set in.

The night was cloudless, with a moonless sky lit with blazing stars, and scarcely a breath of wind wrinkled the glassy surface of the sea. It must have been near midnight when I quit work. I brought a mattress from the cabin, threw it upon the deck and stretched myself upon it. I fell asleep immediately. It must have been well on toward daylight when I awoke suddenly, with the impression that some person besides myself was aboard the vessel. I could in no way account for the feeling, but it came over me strongly as I got up and looked about the deck. The moon, a distorted mass of reddish yellow, had come up out of the sea, and was throwing a weird sort of light upon the brig. As I glanced forward I saw the figure of what appeared to be a person moving swiftly along the deck. I had barely got my eyes upon it when it disappeared through the open hatch. You can well imagine my surprise. Who could it be and where could the person have come from? I walked quickly and looked over the sides of the vessel, half expecting to see a boat lying alongside, but nothing of the kind was to be seen. As far as my eyes could reach, there was no vessel in sight. Whoever it was that I had seen must have been aboard when I came. It all seemed very strange, and had I been inclined to be superstitious, I should have been convinced that I had seen a ghost. As it was, I took a different view of the matter, and resolved to find out who the strange visitor could be.

Lighting the candle, I descended the companion ladder. I made a careful search through the cabins and peered in every nook and corner 'tween decks, but no living soul was to be seen. Whoever it was must be in the hold; that was evident. I went to the main hatchway and dropped down among the cargo. It was as dark as a coal-pit down there, but by the light of the candle I made my way aft. I will not deny that a kind of "creepy" feeling came over me as I made my way over the bales and casks, for there was no telling what or whom I might find hidden in the gloomy place.

Passing through a small aperture in the bulkhead, I entered the after part of the hold. Here I found a number of large butts filled with some sort of liquid, and several crates of very large size. I looked searchingly about the apartment, but could see nothing. I was about to retrace my steps, when my eyes fell upon a woman's shawl lying on one of the crates, as if it had been dropped there recently, for it lay in such a position on the crate that it must have fallen off under any ordinary motion of the vessel. Holding the candle aloft, I crept forward and peered over the crate into the corner.

As I did so, the form of a woman arose from a nook in the corner and stood staring at me, her face pale with fear, her form trembling. I was too much surprised at the sudden vision to speak, and for a moment I could hardly believe the evidence of my senses. She could not have been over eighteen or twenty, and looked very beautiful, I thought, standing there in the candle's flickering light.

"In the name of Heaven, who are you?" she said, in an agitated voice, being the first to speak.

"A friend, who will be glad to serve you," I replied, noticing the look of fear upon her face. "My name is Myron Holt; my vessel was wrecked, and I was cast ashore on the little island over there. I saw the brig drifting and came aboard, believing it to have been abandoned."

"Thank God! Then you are not of the *Isabella's* crew," she cried, a look of intense relief coming over her face. "God forbid that I should fall into their hands!"

"There is no likelihood of that," I replied, "for wherever the crew you mention can be, it is certain they are not here." And I told her how for days I had watched on the little island in vain for the glimpse of a sail.

She seemed greatly relieved at this; and inviting her to come with me, we passed through the hold to the hatchway, where I assisted her to the deck. It was daylight by this time, and the first beams of the rising sun were streaming in a golden flood across the gleaming sea.

As you may well believe, I was much mystified over the discovery of a woman aboard the abandoned brig, but I felt sure that there must have been a mutiny aboard the *Isabella*, or something of that sort, and that she had escaped and had been hiding in the hold. My surmises proved to be correct in the main point, as I soon learned.

She looked very pale and faint as we came into the light, and fetching a camp-stool from one of the cabins, I bade her take a seat on the deck while I made some coffee. Then I scampered below, and building a fire in the galley, began to prepare breakfast. At this juncture the young lady came in.

"It is hardly fair to leave this work to you," she said with a faint smile, which made her look very beautiful. "Allow me to assist you." And without ado she began to busy herself with the work of preparing our morning meal. She went into the pantry, and, with a woman's instinct, brought to light many things that I had overlooked, among which were some jars of fruit, pepper, spice and a small cask of olives, and we soon had a most appetizing breakfast of fried ham, toasted cheese, fruit and fragrant coffee prepared.

While we ate she told me the story of how she came to be alone aboard the *Isabella*. Her name was Florence Mayfield, and her father was an English merchant doing business in Rio. Two weeks before she had taken passage in the *Isabella*, bound for Marseilles, to join her mother, who was in Southern France for her health. There was a large treasure in gold aboard the brig, and this becoming known to the sailors, who were a vicious lot of Spanish and Portuguese, they laid a plot to possess themselves of the treasure. A mutiny was raised, and captain and officers were overpowered and thrown overboard. While this was going on, Miss Mayfield, becoming almost beside herself with terror, fled from her cabin and concealed herself in the hold. She could only give a vague conjecture as to what took place after that. But from what information she was able to give, it was evident that the mutinous crew had rifled the vessel of such valuables as could be taken with them, and then taken to the boats, carrying their booty along. They had doubtless feared capture if they remained aboard the brig, and it seemed likely that they had made for the nearest point on the South American coast. Not for a whole day after the crew had abandoned the vessel did Miss Mayfield venture from her place of concealment, so fearful was she that some of them had remained aboard. Though almost despairing at finding herself alone on the abandoned brig, she could not help feeling a sense of deep thankfulness that the murderous crew were gone from the vessel. She had been alone three days upon the brig when it went aground just off the island. When she heard my footsteps on deck she had fled in terror and hidden herself in the hold, fully believing that the mutinous crew had returned.

She had scarcely finished her story when there came the sound of strange voices, mingled with the dip of oars.

Miss Mayfield started up, trembling, her face as pale as death.

It was plain that a boat was approaching the brig, but whether it contained friends or foes remained yet to be seen.

"Remain here till I return," I said, and ran lightly up the companion ladder. I had barely poked my head above the deck when I perceived half a score of swarthy-visaged sailors in the act of clambering aboard. A single glance convinced me that they were Spaniards, and as hard-looking a set of rascals as I ever put my eyes on. I dropped back below and rejoined Miss Mayfield, for I was convinced that in the fellows I had seen I would have some ugly customers to deal with.

"It is the *Isabella* crew returned," she said, scarcely above her breath. "I know by their voices it must be so."

"Perhaps you are right," I replied; "they are Spaniards, I am quite sure, still I can't see that there is any cause for alarm."

As I spoke, I led the way into the cabin where I had seen the guns, and had soon possessed myself of the cutlass and the two muskets.

"It is well enough to be on the safe side," I said, as I hastily loaded one of the pieces. "Those Spaniards are treacherous rascals, but not over-anxious to face cold lead."

By this time I could hear the sailors hurrying across the deck, while several came tumbling down the companion-ladder in a wild, headlong manner and went crowding toward the cuddy, making a great clatter as they went. Luckily, none of them came into the cabin where we were, and, taking advantage of the time gained, I loaded the other musket and gave it in charge of Miss Mayfield. I thought it best to be prepared for any emergency, not knowing the character of the men with whom we had to deal. Then advancing, I threw open the door and stood on the threshold. Two of the sailors who had just descended from the deck now came toward me. The foremost, whose name, as I afterward learned, was Francisco, was a powerful, heavy set individual of perhaps forty, with a countenance that told of fierceness and low cunning.

"May Heaven help us, it is the *Isabella* crew!" said Miss Mayfield, as her eyes encountered the two men.

A look of amazement came over the faces of the two as their eyes fell upon me. They came to an abrupt halt, exchanged a fe hurried words, then came forward.

"Where did you come from?" asked t foremost, eying me suspiciously. He spok in English, and laid his hand on a heav cutlass that hung at his side.

"I came from the island over there," I r plied, assuming a cool and indifferent ai "My vessel was wrecked, and this is th first sail I have set eyes on since I wa stranded on the island."

"May I ask what has become of the cre of this vessel?" he asked.

"I think you might answer that questio better than I," I replied.

A cunning smile crossed the Spaniard face.

"Who has told you of this?" he aske eying me closely.

"I did not say that any one had told me I answered.

"Perhaps you would like a chance to ha us all over to the law?" he said, a threate ing look in his eye.

"Oh, as to that," I returned, lightly, "w may none of us ever see land again, and wh bother our heads with what is likely to ha pen when we get there? I for one won't not I."

At this juncture his eyes fell upon Mi Mayfield. He removed his hat and made graceful bow.

"I am happy to see that we have a lad aboard," he said, a smile curling his yello lips. "We all could have sworn that sh went overboard during our little troubl with the officers of the brig, but I see sh has escaped. Let me congratulate you, Mi Mayfield. I shall be happy to take yo under my protection till these little un pleasant adventures that have befallen u all are over."

"I shall not need your protection," sh replied, coolly. "May I ask what is you object in coming back to the brig?"

"To be sure, my lady," he answered, agai bowing with profuse politeness. "In th first place, we failed to find the land—havin a lot of drunken fellows managing the boa when the fog came on—and in the secon place, our coming back was a pure acciden But now that we are here, we are going t get this old hulk to sea again and put fo some safe port."

Then without saying more he turned an walked toward the cuddy.

I did not like the man's looks and manne There was something sinister and evil in hi smooth ways that told me that he was dangerous as well as a treacherous rasca When he had disappeared I turned to Mi Mayfield.

"What shall we do?" she asked, a look grave apprehension on her pale face. "Thos men are demons—there is no crime th would not commit."

"Perhaps they may not attempt to mole us," I said, "as they could have no partic lar object in doing so. In any case I sha keep a close watch on their movement They are a villainous-looking crew, I mu admit, but I fancy their object just now to get safely ashore, where they can mak way with their booty. This being the cas they will hardly care to thrust their nec further into the halter by committing an unnecessary crimes."

I spoke cheerfully—far more so than I fel

"Heaven grant that you may be right she said, "but I can't help feeling a sort horror come over me when I realize th character of those men we have to de with."

I could hear boisterous talking aft, and knew the sailors were helping themselves the wine and other liquors in the cudd This served to increase my feeling of u easiness. Vicious when they were sober, could not be expected that they would less so when their brains should become i flamed by strong drink. This sort of bu ness ought to be stopped. I recogniz Francisco as a leader among them, and was resolved to see him and, if possibl prevail on him to restrain them. The thoughts had hardly taken shape in m mind when he made his appearance at th door.

"I was just wanting to speak to you, said. "I take it that you are a lead among these men, and your will is doubtle law."

"When they are not crazy with drin senor," he replied, a gleam of pleasure cros ing his face.

"Ah, that is just it," I continued, seei the effect of the flattery of my words. "Th is what I wished to speak about. I want suggest that you place a guard over t wines and liquors, and only give out a sma allowance. As for myself, I care not; b we ought to do this out of regard for t lady who has been thrown among us."

"The senor is right; I must see to th matter at once. I shall be glad to do an thing possible for the lady's security a comfort. I will have all the liquors tumbl in the cabin next to this one, and if t senor will oblige me, I would be glad to ha him placed as a guard over the store."

"That will suit me, and I am ready at a time to help you put your orders in effect."

With a bow to Miss Mayfield, he wheel and went back to where the men were gat ered in the cuddy.

I felt more easy now, for the chang manner of the leader toward me would a ford a chance for perfecting some plan action. The arrangement, as it was, wou place me in a position where I could n only keep a close watch on what was goi on, but would give me an opportunity watching over Miss Mayfield that no harm should befall her.

In a few moments several of the sailors came with casks to the cabin, and the liquor was soon safely stored within. Then the door was locked and the key given into my possession, while I stationed myself at the door to see that nothing was molested.

But the men had already obtained more than was good for them, and I feared that there might be trouble with some of them before the day was over.

Having settled this arrangement, Francisco sent the sailors above to put the brig in shape for sailing when she should be got off of the reef. The men scowled at me as they passed by, in a manner that I did not like. I felt sure that they would be only too glad of the chance to give me a thrust with a knife, but it was plain that they feared their leader, and did not care to brave his authority.

When they were all gone above, I seated myself upon an empty chest and tried to think coherently of the situation. With such a crew aboard the vessel, it was hard to tell what the outcome would be, and there seemed no way of escape. As for myself, I did not fear the consequences, but for the welfare of Miss Mayfield, I was filled with the gravest apprehensions. While these thoughts were passing through my mind, Francisco returned from the deck. His manner was very cordial, and I could see that he had something to say to me.

"I don't think those fellows will give us any trouble now," he began. "I am glad you spoke of keeping them from the liquor in time to keep them from getting drunk."

"What do you propose to do?" I asked. "Get the brig afloat and sail her to some port?"

"That is what we want to do," he replied, "and that is just what I came to speak to you about. Do you know the latitude and longitude of this island?"

"I do not. We were far out of our course when the *Mary Ann* went down."

"Perhaps you could give a close guess as to our position on the chart?"

"I think I could."

"That will do, then. I want you to help us to get the brig to the South American coast. Do you understand navigation?"

"Yes, that is, in a general way; enough to answer our purpose, I think."

"That will answer. I know little about the business myself, and if you can set us ashore you will lose nothing." And he went on to unfold all his plans, which were to sail the brig to the South American coast, and there he and his men would disembark, leaving the vessel in the possession of Miss Mayfield and myself. As this seemed fair enough, I could offer no objections, and so the matter was settled.

The day passed without incident. The sailors were busy at their work on deck, and I saw but little of them. I spoke to Miss Mayfield regarding the proposed plan of Francisco, and after discussing the matter with her, she was of the opinion that we could do nothing better than acquiesce in the plan, though she warned me to be on my guard against treachery.

About ten at night I entered the cabin where the wines were stored, and, after fastening the door, I kicked off my shoes and threw myself on the bunk. I fell into a light sleep, which must have lasted two or three hours. When I awoke I was exceedingly thirsty. I got up and opened the door. All was quiet. The sailors had retired to their bunks, and the only sound that came to my ears was the low lapping of the waves against the side of the vessel. But now, as I walked in the direction of the cuddy for the purpose of getting some water, I came to an abrupt halt, for the sound of low voices fell upon my ears. I recognized one of the voices as that of Francisco. They were talking in Spanish, a language which I understood sufficiently to catch the drift of their conversation. The first words caused me to stand stock still. For five minutes I stood there in the darkness listening intently to what the men were saying, then I crept back to my cabin, a feeling of horror coming over me. What I had overheard told me that I was to be used to navigate the brig to land, then, to prevent my ever being a witness against them, I was to be murdered, the ship scuttled, and Miss Mayfield carried away as a prisoner! That was the murderous plan of the man who, only a few hours before, had professed friendship for me.

Appalled by the dreadful discovery, I reëntered my cabin, and hastily drew on my coat and shoes. Bewildered, like one in a dream, I hardly knew what to do, or which way to turn. Should I apprise Miss Mayfield of what I had discovered? No; I would simply put her on her guard, telling her to hold herself in readiness to act with me in case I found some way of escape. I went to her cabin door and knocked softly, calling her name in a low tone, and cautioning her to make no sound. In a few moments she came to the door and opened it.

"Don't let me alarm you," I said, in a guarded tone, "but I want to tell you to hold yourself in readiness to come with me at any moment. I am going on deck now to look for some means of escape from the vessel."

Then I stole noiselessly up the companion ladder. Several of the sailors were stretched on mattresses here and there upon the deck, fast asleep. The watch was fast asleep at the binnacle, his yellow face touched by the rays of the red moon which was just coming up out of the sea. I glanced over the rail. It was as I expected. The boat in which the Spaniards had come was still lying alongside. It had come to my mind to make off in the boat, for once clear of the brig we could soon be beyond the reach of the mutineers, there being no boat left in which pursuit could be made. But to get away with the boat without being discovered was the main point. I realized the danger of the undertaking, but it was the only chance. To wait till the brig was gone to sea would cut off all hope of escape. There was not a moment to lose.

Was the boat provided with water and provisions? In a moment I had slipped over the rail and dropped into the boat. To my joy I found some casks of water, as well as a fair supply of provisions. This would save incurring the danger of bringing these supplies from the brig's stores. Clambering back to the deck I went noiselessly below, where I found Miss Mayfield waiting for me.

Without a word she followed me up the companion-ladder. As we crossed the deck I saw that the sailors were still asleep, and I breathed a silent prayer that they would remain so for five minutes longer.

I brought with me the two muskets and a heavy cutlass, and depositing these on the deck, I quickly assisted Miss Mayfield to descend into the boat. When this was done I lowered the guns, and was about to follow myself when a hand was laid on my shoulder, and I turned to confront the blazing eyes of Francisco.

He held a cocked pistol in his hand, and there was a smile of evil triumph on his face as he said:

"So the senor would give us the slip—"

He did not finish what he was going to say, for with the bound of a tiger I was grappling with him. He was no match for me, and in a moment I had wrenched the pistol from his grasp, and with a single blow left him senseless on the deck. Then I went over the rail like a flash and dropped into the boat just as the sailors awoke and came hurrying aft to see what the matter was.

I found Miss Mayfield almost beside herself with terror, but a little cry of joy escaped her as she saw that I was unharmed. Cutting loose from the brig, I seized the oars and sent the boat out across the water. At the same instant cries of excited rage came from the deck, and several dark forms crowded to the rail; but it was some time before a realization of what had taken place came to the bewildered crew, and by that time we were well beyond their reach. A few shots were fired after the boat, but they flew wide of their mark. A good breeze was blowing, and, hoisting the sail, the boat sped away in the darkness.

When daylight came the island and the brig were lost behind the blue rim of the sea. In addition to the stores found in the boat, we discovered the treasure which had brought on the mutiny, snugly stored where the mutineers had placed it.

About the middle of the afternoon we were picked up by the *Penguin*, Captain Cyrus Longstone, bound from Southampton to Rio. That ended my adventures. When we arrived at port we brought the first news of the mutiny of the *Isabella's* crew. The story of the escape of Miss Mayfield and myself from the murderous crew, and the bringing back of the treasure, was in everybody's mouth, and I shall never forget the warm expressions of gratitude that came from the girl's father as he took my hands in his, and thanked me for what I had done to bring her safely back to his arms.

But I could never see that I deserved any praise for what I did, but whether or not I merited it, my reward was all that heart could desire, for she who escaped with me from the *Isabella* is my wife, and the reward of five thousand dollars in golden doubloons which was given for the return of the treasure was our marriage portion.

THE END.

IN SEARCH OF GOLD.*

BY COLIN MIDDLETON,

Author of "The Fool of Destiny," "Innes of Blairavon," etc.

["IN SEARCH OF GOLD" was commenced in No. 52. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the Newsdealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

CHAPTER XIV—*(Continued)*.

TWO months passed, and life became burdensome to Ivor and Beausire.

Beausire became fretful and querulous, while Ivor was very silent, almost morose.

They made various efforts to make matters lively, but the utter sameness of existence was beginning to pall on them.

Every morning, when they rose, their first glance was over the sea. Every evening, at dusk, their last look was again seaward.

So far no ship had been seen passing, and as each slow day came to a close Ivor felt a dull, sinking pain at his heart that another day had been put between him and the accomplishment of his desires.

What a mad fool he had been ever to leave England! He chafed at this powerlessness to do anything even more than at his imprisonment at Kimberley.

Nearly six months gone, and he had not even yet reached his destination; nor, indeed, did there appear to be an early prospect of his doing so.

The amount of provisions stored in the *cache* boded ill for a frequent visit from the relieving ship. The fact that the ship in which they had started from Cape Town was lost would help her owners little in their conjectures as to where she had been lost. Hog Island was much to the southward of the course of any vessel going to Australia, and no ships took that course on their journey westward.

What would Gwen think of his silence? By this time his second promised letter was long due, and it might be months before he could write again. He had never told her that he loved her—that his desire of life was only for her; and in the interval many things might happen.

Why should a magnificent girl such as she was—an heiress, too, in a small way—think of a poor, penniless fellow?

Although half-believing in his own mind that his passion for Gwen was to a certain extent reciprocated, yet at the same time he was unable to rid himself of that self-depreciation which any man who is worthy the name must feel when he compares himself with the lady of his love.

Poor Ivor! How he wished that he had asked her to marry him and had been refused! There would have been some negative satisfaction in that, at least. The knowledge that a suit is hopeless deadens some part of the craving, and precludes that restlessness, born of deferred hope, which makes the world so gray.

This silent torture was at times more than Ivor could bear, and he would wander away by himself and abandon himself to a frenzy of despair. It was at times such as these that he cursed himself for ever having left England. It seemed impossible that life at twenty-three could hold such bitterness. Before the other members of the party he maintained an even, an almost gay temperament.

Not one of them but regarded him as the most cheerful member of the party, and one and all recognized in him the man who had the moral right to dictate to them their actions.

After the sailor's one and only attempt to kick against the pricks, everything had gone smoothly. Each may have had his private chagrin, but they managed to successfully hide it from their fellows. No one guessed at the secret pain which was gnawing at Ivor's heart. He was silent for the most part, but ever ready with a cheerful answer to any question, and he often managed to perform the necessary facial contortion to effect a smile.

Three months had passed, and Beausire was restless and captious. A man who had lived in idleness, which consisted of amusement provided in a thousand different ways—amusement which costs no effort to secure—naturally felt the loss of the relaxation of life much more than those who had regarded amusement not as the "be-all and end-all" of existence, but merely as an accessory to it.

The horror of having nothing to do was certainly telling on them all, with the exception of Lola. She seemed happy enough.

Anatole had reached that stage of his passion when he assured himself a thousand times a day that she loved him, and again ten thousand times a day that she did not. He found life resolve itself into periods of delirious joy and gnawing despair, which followed so quickly on each other that the most piercing emotion—the despair—seemed always to be present.

More than three months had passed, and on one afternoon Ivor had wandered away by himself, leaving Beausire seated on a ledge of rock and idly throwing pebbles into the sea.

Ivor had noticed that for a week or so Beausire had been singularly silent. When he had spoken it had not been to rail furiously against his imprisonment on this cursed, mist-encircled island, but about his idle days at Cambridge—his escapades on an *exéat* to town—those stolen hours of delight in undergraduate days which live green in every man's memory, be they days spent in honest, boyish amusements, as had been Ivor's, or in raking and deviltry, as Beausire had passed them.

Toward dusk Ivor came slowly along the narrow beach, which was studded with bowlders. His head was bent, and on his face was that expression which tells that a man's soul and body are things apart. As he paced along this miserable island in the Southern Seas the true Ivor was on the banks of the Usk, walking side by side with a tall and stately maiden.

He came slowly round the side of a large bowlder, and stopped suddenly as though he had been petrified.

Not three yards from him, with their backs turned toward him, were Lola and—Beausire.

Beausire had his arm round her waist, and, when Ivor caught sight of them, was in the act of kissing her. From the little that Ivor could see of Lola's face, she appeared to be enjoying it.

Ivor stood still, and Beausire, happening to look round, saw him.

To do him justice, one must say that he blushed and rose from the ground.

Lola then looked round, saw Ivor, and smiled. She did not seem in the least degree embarrassed. After the first momentary blush of shame—or was it vexation at being discovered?—a hard, stubborn look overspread Beausire's face.

Ivor advanced toward the pair, and said to Beausire in a low voice:

"Would you mind asking her to go back to her hut?"

Beausire looked undecided. Then his natural aversion to a scene in the presence of a woman came to his assistance, and he muttered a few disconnected French words, and Lola, looking first from one to the other, slowly walked away.

These two fine *Ingleses* were going to fight—about her. That was so far satisfactory. She hoped the smaller would win. He was not so fine-looking as the other, but the tall one was so stern—a thorough gentleman, but uninteresting.

She did not care one snap of the fingers for Beausire, but it was pleasant, after all those years of surveillance in Spain, to be able to flirt, with no one to say her nay. Anatole would be angry, and then all three would fight.

When Lola had gone some fifty yards away, Ivor turned to Beausire.

"This must stop, and instantly, Beausire."

"Why, may I ask?"

Beausire felt that he had a poor case, and was in consequence all the more determined to make the most of it.

"Because I say so."

"And supposing I refuse to recognize your right to dictate?"

"You have already recognized it in the case of the sailor," said Ivor. He knew this was a weak argument the moment the words had passed his lips.

"That is a very different matter. I supported you then because it was the case of a superior being flouted by an inferior. Between you and me there is no difference of that kind."

"None the less do I insist that this shall go no further."

"And I absolutely decline now to obey you on the point. I shall do exactly as I please in this matter, without reference to you or any one else."

They were both exceedingly calm. Ivor, because he was determined that, come what might, he should have his way in this matter. Beausire, because he was doing his utmost to hide the tumult of conflicting emotions which were raging in him.

"Then you must take the consequences."

"And what are the consequences? Do you intend to constitute yourself king of this cursed island? I won't stand any of your hectoring nonsense. You go your way, and I will go mine, and we can take the consequences of our own acts on our own shoulders."

"It won't help matters for you to lose your temper, Beausire. I am absolutely determined on this point. If it is necessary, I shall even use force."

"You have the pull there," said Beausire, sneeringly. "I unfortunately left my revolver in my cabin when the ship went down."

"I didn't refer to that, and you knew it."

"To what did you refer, then?"

"To restraining you by force, if necessary, from flirting with that Spanish girl."

"What harm is there in flirting with her?" asked Beausire, calm once more.

"All the harm in the world, for—"

"Anatole does it pretty freely."

"Pardon me, he does not. Anatole is in love with her; you are not. The attention he pays her is because he wants to win her for his wife."

"And mayn't a man flirt with a girl without wishing to marry her?"

"I suppose he may with a lady in his own rank of life, if he can find any one he sufficiently despises to allow himself to do so."

"And what is the difference, pray?"

"Just this—that a man does not flirt with a girl in an inferior rank of life without an ulterior motive."

"Do you mean to insinuate that I want to do the girl any harm?"

"As you force me to say it, that is exactly what I do mean."

"And what right have you to insinuate that?" said Beausire, blustering.

Ivor shrugged his shoulders. From what he knew of Beausire's previous life, he had an answer ready to hand, but his natural generosity forbade him to use it. It would provoke violence, for there are things which no man may say to another, be they true or not, with impunity. Ivor held the cards. Physically, Beausire could not compare with him; but mere force, after all, is a poor argument. Still Ivor was determined that, should matters come to a crisis, he would resort to force to prevent any harm from coming to the girl.

"I am waiting for your answer," said Beausire, after a pause which had lasted some seconds.

"And I have none to give," said Ivor, quietly. "I merely repeat that this intimacy, which I know has only begun to-day, shall go no further."

"And I mean to amuse myself in my own way, without reference to you or any one else."

"Then we are at a deadlock, I suppose,

---

*Copyright, 1896, by ROBERT BONNER'S SONS.
All rights reserved.

and I shall be compelled to forcibly prevent what it seems impossible to prevent by persuasion."

Beausire would not disguise the fact from himself that, bored to the verge of madness by this intolerable island, he had deliberately begun to make love to Lola that afternoon. It was a pity that such a beautiful creature as Lola should be thrown away on Anatole. Bah! He should do as he liked, with no reference to Ivor.

After Ivor's last speech they had stood in silence, some three yards apart. Ivor had spoken very firmly. Beausire was looking out over the sea, with a surly, dogged look on his face.

Ivor waited for some sign from him, and none came. He then took one pace nearer to Beausire, and said in a softer, more conciliating tone:

"Look here, old man, I have no desire to quarrel with you. I am too much in your debt for that. But just look at the matter calmly for a moment. Here we are thrown onto the most detestable island on the whole face of the globe, and unluckily this girl is wrecked with us. She is entirely in our hands, defenseless. When we are rescued—as we shall be in due course—the story of our shipwreck will be known over the whole world. Just think what an opinion of Englishmen will go abroad if it became known that an English gentleman, the son of a British peer, devoted his time to making love to this unlucky Spanish girl, who had no means of defending herself, and that the other men on the island had not the grace to do all in their power to prevent it. It wouldn't sound well, would it? Don't you think that we ought rather to consider that she is, for the moment, given into our charge to protect in any way we can? We ought to respect her and help her to respect herself. A simple, uneducated girl no doubt feels honored by the notice of a man in your position. Now at the present moment she probably has no idea in her mind of anything but what you call 'flirting.' It is a pleasant pastime for her, and time hangs heavy on her hands here. But you know well enough how these things imperceptibly progress, and lead to lifelong regret. The entire blame will be with you; the suffering with her. No, old chap, I am certain that if you will only think of the matter in its proper light, you will see that it would be the blackest stain on your character if you did anything to occasion sorrow to that girl, situated as she is here."

During the latter part of Ivor's speech Beausire had been kicking a hole in the sand in an irresolute sort of way.

When Ivor had finished, Beausire looked up, and although his face still wore a look of defiance, there was that in his eyes which made Ivor think that perhaps he had not spoken altogether in vain.

They walked slowly back to the hut without speaking; and after they had eaten their evening meal, during which Lola had glanced with interest from the face of one to the other, they retired without breaking silence.

After breakfast on the following morning, Beausire walked after Ivor along the beach, and coming up to him, held out his hand and said:

"You are right, Ivor. I should be a cur to try to win that girl's affections. I have heard that sort of talk before—I mean what you were talking about last night—and always thought it highfalutin' nonsense in the abstract. Now I am brought face to face with it. I thought about it all night. You are right."

Ivor gripped his hand hard, but said nothing.

"I will give you my word if you like, Ivor."

"There is no need for that," answered Ivor.

CHAPTER XV.

AN INTERRUPTED WEDDING.

The weary weeks rolled on, with no incident to vary the monotony of existence. Ivor and Beausire amused themselves by watching the various stages of Anatole's suit. He passed through all the phases which characterize the little comedy.

These were days when it was quite obvious that Anatole considered life a hollow mockery—when he talked of suicide, of a watery grave, with a seriousness and an air of depression which were often too much for his hearers' gravity. There were days, again, when all the world was bright—when the air was full of music—when the very fact of life was in itself delirious enjoyment.

Sometimes his melancholy would last for an entire week, emphasized by the wild delight of the preceding and succeeding days.

He and Lola managed to converse with considerable fluency in a jargon which they alone could understand. Lola was, as always, serene and smiling—quite enough in love with her volatile and eager lover to take the trouble to tease him and keep him for days on the tenter-hooks of despair.

Since she had seen that her one flirtation with Beausire was to be her last, she had accepted the situation with true Spanish philosophy. Now she had allowed matters to go too far with Anatole to permit of her accepting anything but the simplest triflings with any one else—at any rate, until this matter had come to its conclusion.

For a moment the thought had flashed through her brain that it would be well to do her best with this young Englishman. He came of *la nobleza* of his country. She should make the most of her opportunity. All had gone well on that brief afternoon until Ivor had appeared. Since then there had been no advance on the Englishman's part. It was strange. He seemed to have enjoyed himself on that one occasion. But these English were strange. She had been told so in her own country.

At that time she was not in love with Anatole. She suffered him—gladly, perhaps, but that was all. Now all that was changed. Anatole was experiencing his *grand amour*, and it seemed as though it would not be—as it is in most cases—all on one side. Anatole had at last discovered that there might be a chance for him, after all, and the intensity of his excitement had become ludicrous.

Ivor had found it necessary to expostulate with him on his restlessness and loquacity in his sleep.

Anatole had shrugged his shoulders in a deprecating manner as he answered:

"But, sir, what can you expect? When a man is in love, as I am, it is impossible to sleep quietly."

Six months had passed, and one morning, as Ivor and Beausire were idling on the beach, Anatole rushed up to them, his face radiant with delight. He embraced Ivor with fervor, kissing him on both cheeks—an honor which Ivor did not seem to appreciate as he ought.

"I have her promise," said Anatole, after some moments, in a voice choked with emotion.

"Of what?" said Beausire.

"To marry me," answered Anatole, as he laughed aloud for joy.

"I fancy you will find some difficulty in procuring a priest to celebrate the ceremony according to the rites of the Catholic Church in this delightful island," said Beausire.

"*Ah, ça !*" answered Anatole, shrugging his shoulders doubtfully and throwing up his hands.

"At any rate, we congratulate you heartily. She is a very good girl," said Beausire.

"She is a goddess!" said Anatole, with an air of conviction.

"They all are—in theory," said Beausire.

"You are joking, sir," answered Anatole, with dignity. "A matter of such seriousness does not allow itself to become a jest."

Ivor's French was of that order which is learned at a public school. He could not, in consequence, utter a single consecutive sentence grammatically, nor, had he been able to do so, would Anatole have understood, for his ideas of pronunciation were more than vague. He could, however, understand all Anatole's conversation perfectly, and did at times deliver himself of solitary words.

The congratulation of Lola was a more difficult matter, and had to be conducted through the medium of Anatole, who embellished Ivor's and Beausire's words of congratulation with additions of his own.

Lola smiled her thanks, and in her own language "kissed the feet of the *caballeros Ingleses.*" Then followed some weeks of pure delight for Anatole. He was never tired of singing Lola's praises, or of calling the attention of Ivor and Beausire to her charms.

This was amusing enough for a time, but Beausire had no wish to be the confidant of the Frenchman's passion. He tried to explain to him that he was perfectly willing to take all Lola's perfections for granted, but that he really could not suffer himself to be bored day in and day out by a torrent of exaggerated words on a subject which, as Anatole must know, ought to have no interest for him.

Anatole had never known of the one little scene which had passed between Beausire and Lola. Had he been aware of it, the extent of his jealousy—even though he knew that the prize was his—would never have suffered him to regard Beausire as anything but a "monster."

As it was, he would merely throw up his hands and mutter to himself:

"These English, how they are cold!"

His impatience at the delay of the relief ship grew more marked as each sun set and no sign appeared on the horizon of that for which all longed so intensely.

The sailor alone seemed to be perfectly contented. He had said to Ivor that "so fur as 'e was concerned, 'e would jest as soon pass the rest of his life there as anywhere else; there worn't no work to do, any'ows, and 'e 'ad never yet come across any berth where there was plenty to eat and nothing to do."

He had, in fact, reached the Valhalla of the true British workman. He could sit all day, if he so chose, with his hands in his pockets, and whistle, or yawn, or expectorate; and his meals, with meat—plenty of meat—came with the regularity of the dawn. What could a man want more?

He was told by Beausire that Anatole and Lola were engaged to be married, at which news a sardonic grin spread over his face. He spat in a contemptuous manner, blew his nose similarly, and said:

"Jest about what I thort they would do. Seems to be about as many durn fools a-growin' up every day as dies every day."

Beausire "would like a more lucid explanation of his meaning."

"Don't you be a-gittin' at me, now. Wot I means is that when any feller as isn't blind sees every blessed day of 'is life two people a-gittin' married so as they can welt one another, an' fight an' cuss, w'y it seems to me as if they would be jest as well apart, an' a durn sight better, too. Lor', I knows all about it. I got an old 'ooman down at Wapping as clawed most 'arf my face orf afore I come away this trip. D' ye see that?" and he pointed to two long scars running down his cheek—"that 's Bess."

"You seem to think that marriage is a failure, then?" asked Beausire.

"Failure!" snorted the sailor. "'A course it 's a failure; 'cos ye never know wot a 'ooman's thinkin' about. She ain't like a man, wot usually lies, an' ye know it. Ye never knows when a 'ooman is lyin' or not, an' they 're all flim-flams an' idees. Wot yer think she clawed me for las' time? W'y, jes' 'cos I says 'Nice mornin' ' to a tidy bit of a 'ooman as was passin' the door; an' Bess, jealous as a wildcat, takes arf my face orf. No, I ain't takin' no more marriage."

"And did you retaliate?" said Beausire.

"Blest if I know wot 'retalyate' means; but if yer mean 'Did I durn well punch 'er 'ead into a bleedin' jelly?' you may bet yer 'at I did—cuss 'er!"

"Ah! I quite agree with you, then, that in your case marriage was a failure."

"So 'tis always," said the sailor, as he spat on the ground again.

"Then why did you marry yourself?"

"*I* dunno. I'd know'd Bess a tidy bit, an' I was jes' off a long trip an' goin' fresh; an' Bess was a trim sort er craft in them days. We walked a night or two, an' she come sailin' along one night in a brand-new yaller shawl an' cleaned up an' smart-like; an I sez: 'Did ye ever think er gettin' spliced, Bess?' An' she sez: 'Yus, Bill. When ye like.' An' so there we were—an' we ain't done fightin' since," he added, reflectively.

At this moment the figures of Lola and Anatole, some three hundred yards away on the beach, were silhouetted against the sky. Anatole was bending over her fondly, and the silver ring of Lola's laughter sounded through the air.

"There they are—look at 'em. In a year's time she 'll be scratchin' 'is face, an' 'e 'll be kickin' 'er, same as me an' Bess. Fools—all on 'em."

"Well, I'm afraid if you told 'em so they would not believe you," said Beausire.

"That's where the cussed foolishness comes in. If Bess was to die to-morror, an' you wos to tell me I 'd marry agen, I should say as you wos a liar, an' yit I dessay I should find myself spliced again in six months or so. That 's the wust o' women. They kinder get at ye ag'in yer will. It ain't fair, anyhow."

Beausire laughed, and left him throwing pebbles into the sea, and inveighing against women.

As time went on the Frenchman's impatience became more than he could bear.

The sailor openly laughed at him, and Anatole, after reckoning up the sailor, decided that he would not challenge him to mortal combat. Besides, these dull, cold-blooded Englishmen did not understand *des émotions*.

Ivor told him that he must curb his impatience; that it was really becoming a question of weeks—possibly, days—until relief should come.

Anatole had to be content with this cold comfort for a time; but as each new day discovered to him new charms in his charmer, he came to Ivor one day to tell him that he could stand it no longer—that he must be married out of hand.

"I am on fire. I cannot live without her."

"No one wants you to," said Beausire, "but you must wait until a qualified person can tie the knot."

"But it is impossible, messieurs. We must be married. *Ah, quelle agonie je souffre !*"

"Don't talk nonsense, my good Anatole. You have just got to wait."

"But it may be forever, on this *sacré* island; one never knows what may arrive."

"If you go on this way we shall be compelled to prevent you from talking to her at all. You must wait."

Anatole had sighed. He wished that he had been ordained priest in order that he might have performed his own marriage service; and then remembering that priests are also ordained to celibacy, he ground his teeth and cursed everything in heaven and earth except his beloved.

One day he appeared, bruised and bleeding, and on inquiry Ivor found that he had been trying to scale the cliffs in the middle of the island, in the hopes of catching an albatross. Ivor had related to them the well-authenticated story of an albatross—picked up dead on the beach—which had brought the news of a crew wrecked on a lonely island, and had died in bringing it. Anatole had proposed to do the same thing—to catch his albatross, affix a piece of one of their empty tins to its neck, and send it abroad to announce the fact of their evil plight, hoping that it might do as its famous predecessor had done, and carry its message to some mainland.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 7.]

DARBY, THE BEAR-HUNTER OF ALASKA.*

BY SEWARD W. HOPKINS,

Author of "In the China Sea," "Two Gentlemen of Hawaii," etc.

["DARBY, THE BEAR-HUNTER OF ALASKA" was commenced in No. 47. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the News-dealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

CHAPTER XXXII.

"WHERE go?" asked another Indian of Pasmogmuddy.

"Find white doves. Get heap pay. Buy plenty bride. Keep eyes on Pasmogmuddy."

"Is there among you a Kotch-a-Kutchin who has arrived lately at the fort?" asked Maxom.

An Indian, much like Tahnag in his general appearance, rose from the center of the crowd.

"When did the brother of the great Tahnag and the Bear-Hunter leave the village of his people?" asked Maxom.

"Soon," solemnly replied the Kotch.

"He means recently," said Mr. Harby.

"And has my brother seen any white strangers on his trail across the snow?"

"The wings of the white doves are cut," said the Kutchin, whose tongue was loosened when it came to flights of metaphor. "They could not fly so far as the Porcupine. Heap far. Heap cold. White dove die in snow."

"And has my brother heard nothing about any strangers being seen?"

"The ears of the warriors are always open. They have not heard the murmur my brother seeks."

"That will do."

"It is no use, Maxom. We will get no information here," I said, gloomily.

"It begins to look like it," he answered.

"Press on. Do not be discouraged, friends," said Mr. Harby. "God will not desert us. These people give up knowledge grudgingly, and perhaps we may yet wrest from them that which we seek. Let me try a word."

He raised his hand to command attention.

"My friends do not understand," he said. "This is a grave question. Let each one of you turn the eyes of his mind inside and see if he can find there any knowledge of the strangers. If there is a man at Fort Yukon who can tell us what we wish to know, let him speak. He will not be sorry."

There was no reply to this.

"Hi!"

The exclamation came from Tahnag.

I looked at him. His face was set. His piercing, far-seeing eyes were fixed as if on an object far away.

"What is it, chief?" I asked.

"Can see?" he asked.

I followed his gaze. Maxom was bending forward. We were looking off toward the south over a long reach of level snow.

"I can see nothing but snow," I said. "Perhaps a hare has run across your vision."

"No see hare. See *man*. Look!"

We looked again. Rising from the snow, into which he had fallen, was a human figure. It was too thinly clad for that climate. The evidences of weakness were in every motion.

He staggered forward. He groped about in the snow. He seemed to be feeling about him as if he was blind. His legs sagged under him. He fell again.

"A white man ill and in distress," said Maxom.

"God help him!" said Mr. Harby. "Clad thus he will soon freeze out there!"

"Let us bring him," said Maxom.

He and I, followed by Tahnag, rushed out of the settlement, making our way as rapidly as we could over the snow to where the ill-fated wanderer now lay, a silent heap, in the snow.

We reached him. Maxom lifted his head.

"My goodness!" he said.

I looked at him. He was thin—starved-looking—a wreck of what he had been.

Yet he was Kirk Morrow!

The various emotions that swayed through me when I saw this wreck of the villain Morrow can hardly be imagined by one who has not experienced the sensation of having love and hate, hope and despair, fighting for the mastery of his mind.

To see Kirk Morrow was to be assured that Jim Bryant and the two victims of their crime were not very far away.

Yet to see him in this condition was to have our hearts torn with doubts and fears, for if he, the arch-conspirator, the master mind of the party, was thus reduced by cold, exposure and privation, what may not have been the plight of the two girls, bereft of the care of even their enemy, and left alone to die, perhaps, in that great northern wilderness of snow!

Maxom looked at me, and I saw that his effort to be calm was not the success it usually was. He was trembling with the same emotions that beset me, and the pallor of his face showed how great were his hopes—or fears, I knew not which.

"He is dying," said the Bear-Hunter. "He is unconscious."

He knelt down in the snow and felt the heartbeat of the man whom, had he met on

---

* Copyright, 1895, by ROBERT BONNER'S SONS. All rights reserved.

equal terms, he would have shot down in his righteous wrath.

"Yet," he added, rising, "he is alive. We must get him to the fort, and revive him in some way, for upon his return to consciousness may depend the fate of the girls, and the hope we have of finding them. Lift him carefully, now, Wetmore. There, Tahnag, a hand this way. Ah! Now carry him gently. Onward."

"This is a strange occurrence, Maxom," I said.

"It is so strange," he said, his voice scarcely under his control, "that I cannot begin to understand or explain it. Where the man has been that he has reached no farther than this, and then to appear in this condition, make a problem that is beyond solution—until he is well enough to talk to us."

"Does it not look as if they had been captured by Indians?" I asked.

"There is reason in it. Such an explanation surely seems the most plausible now. But what Indians, and where?"

"You do not think of the Tananahs in this connection?"

"Impossible. As you know, there were no other white prisoners among them while we were there. No, I cannot explain it by Indians. They have met with disaster in some other way. We must wait till this wretch's tongue is loosened."

"Him gone," said Tahnag, with no trace of sorrow in his voice. "Him got snow madness. No come back any more."

"There may be truth in what you say, Tahnag," replied Maxom. "And I confess it looks like the madness. Yet I hope it is not true, for we have need of the man in his proper senses."

Tahnag shook his head, but said nothing.

And, indeed, the effort of carrying the limp and helpless man over the snow was now considerable, and none of us spoke until we reached the fort.

"Who is he?" asked Mr. Harby, rushing to meet us. "Who is the poor fellow who has been sent by the guidance of the Lord into this place, that we may succor him?"

"I guess you are right, Harby," said Maxom. "If he recovers enough to talk, it will be an answer to your prayer, for it will be seen that he was guided here for *our* purposes, not for his own good. This is Kirk Morrow, one of the men who ran away with William Marshall's daughters and his gold."

"Blessed be His name!" exclaimed the missionary. "Did I not say that he would assist us in the time of need? Come! Bring the miserable, frozen, starving wretch into my house, that we may feed him and warm him, and coax him back to life and wrest his secret from him."

We followed him, and carried the insensible Morrow to the log house of our host.

"Who is this? What? Is there any trouble?" gasped Mrs. Harby, when she saw us. "Is any one shot?"

"Nay, my dear wife," replied the missionary, "no one has been shot. But a wayfarer has been guided hither by God's hand, and as he is cold and starving, bestir yourself quickly and bring that which is nourishing, while we put the fellow to bed and get him warm."

"Do you see that you hurry, then," replied Mrs. Harby, "and have him warm and ready to eat as soon as his broth is ready for him. Broth, gentlemen—broth is the thing when a man is weak from hunger, and Missionary Harby's wife knows how to make it. Yes, and quickly, too."

Mr. Harby was one of the few people of northern Alaska who could boast the possession of blankets. He had two heavy ones, somewhat worn by years of use, but which, nevertheless, were good for several years to come. These he brought, and in a room containing a rude bed and plenty of furs and a fireplace we began our work of resuscitation.

We rolled Morrow in the blankets until the fire in the stone fireplace could be brought to a roaring condition and the room thoroughly warmed. When this was done, we undid the blankets and took off Morrow's clothes. Then we rubbed with no very gentle hands the entire body of the man, bathing our hands in whisky, produced by Mr. Harby, to assist in promoting the circulation.

We slapped the dead-white skin until it grew pink, and until Morrow, who had up to that time been lying without motion, breathing heavily, began to groan, and we knew there was life in the tissues, since he could feel the sting of our repeated blows.

"A little of this inside now," said Mr. Harby, pouring a bit of the whisky into a glass. "Even this, called by many the curse of the frontier, has its uses, and may, like anything else, be blessed in God's service. The Ruler and Maker of all things despises not the meanest of his own creations. Therefore, when whisky is properly applied and not abused, it may be an instrument to work the Divine will. Drink this, poor man, and may God grant that it does you good."

Maxom lifted Morrow's head while Mr. Harby poured the whisky down his throat. He swallowed it as if by a conscious action, sighed heavily, and lay back upon his pillow of goose feathers as if much relieved and invigorated. Yet his eyes, which had been closed, remained so. There was no way to tell whether he knew anything or not. He neither looked at us nor spoke.

Maxom and I persisted in the process of rubbing, and it was not long before a glow of warmth was seen all over the unconscious man.

"Is he ready?" called Mrs. Harby from outside.

"I think we can get some food down him now," said Mr. Harby. "Let us try it, anyway."

He opened the door and took from Mrs. Harby's hand a bowl of steaming gruel, which we at once began to feed to the starving man with a spoon.

He swallowed it, seeming not at first to notice its great heat, but after a time showing by his actions that it burned his throat.

"Water!" he gasped at last. "Give me water!"

"God be praised!" exclaimed Mr. Harby, holding a cup of water to Morrow's lips.

With a grateful sigh, the reviving man lay back on his pillow.

We stood anxiously around him, waiting for him to speak again. But he was silent.

"Morrow, do you know me?" asked Maxom.

There was no answer.

"'Tis well," said Mr. Harby. "He is sleeping. Let us leave him. When he has had a good, long sleep, he will perhaps awake with all his senses."

"Perhaps, Mr. Harby," I repeated. "Then you do not consider him yet out of danger?"

"I do," he replied, "so far as his life is concerned. The man will live. But there is danger of what is called the 'snow-madness.' This is a form of insanity that sometimes attacks people who are lost in the snow, and who grow despondent, hungry and weak and finally lose their minds entirely. The peculiarity of snow madness is that it is usually accompanied by blindness caused by the incessant glare. There is, as I say, still danger of that, but let us hope for the best, and leave him to his much-needed sleep."

We passed out of his room and went to the "best room," there to sit and smoke and talk over this strange occurrence, while we waited for Morrow's sleep to end. Meanwhile, Tahnag went out, and, at Maxom's suggestion, began employing what Kotch-a-Kutchins or other Kutchins he saw, or perhaps a few Rats, who were, with the Chilcoots, to be equipped and held in readiness to start at once, as soon as Morrow had recovered sufficiently to tell us where to find the girls.

When we entered the best room, Hadleigh was sitting by the fire moodily staring into it. Hadleigh had greatly changed since we had left Circle City, and was now invariably morose and silent, pleading illness as the usual excuse for not joining us in anything.

"Kirk Morrow is here," said Maxom, when we entered.

"Kirk Morrow!" gasped Hadleigh, jumping up from his seat and turning a pale face on Maxom. "Kirk Morrow! And is he—al—*alive?*"

"Of course he's alive," said Mr. Harby. "But he is asleep. We have left him to his slumbers, so that he may be able to tell us something of your poor dear cousins and where to find them."

"Why—why—couldn't he tell you *before* he went to sleep?" asked Hadleigh.

"Because he was unconscious," I replied. "It was like this: We saw a man in the distance, groping his way toward us blindly, and he finally fell. We went to his assistance, and found him to be Kirk Morrow. We brought him to this house, where Mr and Mrs. Harby are doing everything in their power to bring him back to life and consciousness. Not, understand, because Kirk Morrow as *himself* is worthy of all this, but that when he regains the powers of speech and thought, he may tell us where Madge and Julia are, so that we may go again in search of them."

"And has he said nothing yet? Has he not uttered a word? Oh, Heaven! Tell me this!"

"Not a word," replied Mr. Harby. "Since he came here he has not opened his eyes nor had a lucid moment."

Hadleigh looked searchingly at each one of us, put his hand to his head and walked unsteadily from the room.

"Do not disturb him now," said Mr. Harby, with authority.

"No," replied Hadleigh. "I am ill. I—I must lie down a while."

"A strange man, that," said Mr. Harby. "I can't say I *like* your companion, Maxom."

"He is strange at times," said Maxom.

"He has changed, too," I said. "When we first knew him he was a fashionable exquisite, with a drawl and slight lisp, very effeminate, seemingly, in many of his ways. But all that has gone. Yet one cannot say that hardship has made a man of him, for he appears no more manly than he did then. But he seems to have dropped his affected manner and peculiar speech, which was assumed, it appears, and is now wholly morose, selfish and uncompanionable."

"A strange man," said Mr. Harby, again, "and strangely affected by Kirk Morrow's appearance. There is something in *that*, you may rest assured."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

We had not sat long when Mrs. Harby came softly into the room.

"Have you sent any one to the sick man's room?" she asked.

"We have not, my dear," replied the missionary. "On the contrary, we are leaving him in peace and quiet to finish his sleep. Why do you ask that question, and why so noiseless in your movements?"

She shook her head.

"There *is* some one there," she said. "I was passing the door and I heard the voices of two men. I easily recognized Mr. Hadleigh's voice, and the other must have been that of the sick man. He was laughing."

"Laughing? Preposterous! If he was *crying*, now, there might be something in it; but *laughing!*"

"I am sure of it," she said. "I heard the sound distinctly."

"This must be looked into!" said Mr. Harby, turning to us. "If what my wife says is true, there is something there which may account for Hadleigh's manner. I have my own views on matters of this kind, and I suppose you have yours."

"What do you mean?" asked Maxom. "Views on what?"

"The proper method of procedure. Now, here we have two men, one of whom is mysterious, and the other a well-known scoundrel. They are talking together, no doubt, on the subject nearest your hearts, and now uppermost in my own. Shall we, therefore, walk into their presence and thus end their conversation, or shall we turn eavesdroppers and listen to what they have to say?"

"I think, under the circumstances, a bit of eavesdropping will not be amiss," I said.

"Not in this case," said Maxom.

"I am glad we are agreed on that. Now, if you will come with me, we may be able to listen to an interesting and instructive conversation. Remove your boots, that our heavy footsteps may not betray us."

We followed his instructions, removed our boots, and Mr. Harby provided us with some skin moccasins in which we could walk noiselessly. Moccasins are not part of the northern Alaskan's outfit, but are used in summer by the Chilcoots and other southern Indians near the coast. Mr. Harby, like many other white people in the north, used them for house-wear, they forming a comfortable substitute for the more conventional slipper.

In these we crept along after our host, who led us through a shed attached to the rear of the house, and then up a ladder that led to the space between the roof and the ceiling of the rooms below. Into this space we crawled, for it was not high enough for us to walk erect, and crept along until Mr. Harby raised his hand as a signal for us to stop.

For a minute or two we could hear nothing. Then, a gurgling kind of laugh, and the voice of Kirk Morrow asking for water.

"Here it is, old man," we heard Hadleigh say. Then, after a pause: "Do you know me, Kirk Morrow?"

"Ha, ha! Ho! He!" came a strange, wild laugh, which sent a chill down my back. "What a pot that is, Jim! Hey, there, waiter, you durn fool! bring us some er the prime stuff! Whisky, mind; good whisky But, say, there, Jim, old boy, the prospect *is* brighter now, eh?"

A groan from Hadleigh broke the silence. There was a pause of a few minutes.

"Twenty-four! Thirty-seven! Forty-three! Fifty-six! Hang it, Jim, this ain't no game for us. There is a Jonah somewhere, sure."

He was playing keno in Nick Desholl's resort in Circle City.

"Never mind that," said Hadleigh. "Do you know where you are and who I am?"

"Ho, ho! But say, what a gay old dash we'll cut, eh, Jim!" came the quavering voice of Morrow. "What? The tenderfoot—that dude? You leave him to me, eh, pard! All he wants is to get rid of that fellow, Maxom. Ha, ha! Well, I guess we are the boys to accommodate *him*, eh?"

"Oh, Heaven!" we heard Hadleigh gasp.

There was a stern, relentless look on Maxom's face, and a triumphant one on Mr. Harby's.

My regret at the moment that we could not see the scene that was being enacted below us was very great.

"Ha, ha! Ho, ho!" laughed the "snow-mad" man below. "Did you see him *stare*, Jim? He *was* surprised. And the girls, confound 'em, they hollered like stuck pigs. That's what woke up the old man. Jove! Jim, this box is heavy, it is. Must be the tenderfoot was right. Must be near half a million o' dust in here. What a dash—eh? The States again? Ha, ha! San Fran, Chicag, New York, even Paris, the gay and wicked. The world is ours, Jim, if we once get out of Alaska with the swag and the girls. Papa Marshall won't need it now. But won't the tenderfoot dude swear when he finds out we took the girls, too. Eh, by gad, Jim, his eyes'll open wide, if they ever open at all. What'll he say, I wonder? And won't he kick because I didn't keep my promise and kill Maxom? Ha, ha! Well, I meant to all right enough; but, Jim, when a man has *love* and *wealth* to guard he can't stoop to be a murderer. *Can* he, now? Forty-seven! Fifty-eight! Sixty-two! I tell you, Jim, this ain't no game for us. Bah! Listen. Hear that? Hear the tenderfoot in there playing billiards. Listen what he says about Bill Marshall's gold. Is it a go, Jim? Durn me if it ain't worth the risk. The girls are pretty enough, and the gold is good yellow. What! The tenderfoot! Leave *him* to me. All he wants—Water—curse it—water! Snow! Ha, ha! That is a repast fit for a king. Not even a gun to kill a goose. I'll starve! Yes, by gad, I'll starve! Snow! Ha, ha! I wonder how it would taste cooked. Ha, ha!"

I shuddered as I listened to the words of the raving criminal. He was living over again the plot, the crime, and now his hunger and thirst during his wanderings. Would he say anything *we* wanted to know? And what could mean his strange allusions to Hadleigh? For there was no doubt that he was meant by "tenderfoot."

"Morrow, do you know me?"

It was Hadleigh again who spoke.

"Ha, ha! Now, birdy dear! *Don't* sing that ugly song. You have wept enough. You *can't* go back to your father, for he is dead. *I* fixed that. You will go with us, dear girls. You will be our sweet companions. Love? Ah! You'll get all the love you want, and a kick or two besides, if you don't do as you're told. No kicking over the traces *now*, me beauties. It don't go—see?"

"Where are we now, Kirk Morrow?"

Hadleigh was falling in with the whim of the man, and was trying to lead him on.

"Ha, ha! The Bear-Hunter did us up, Jim, and no mistake. That *was* a grounder he gave you. Thunder, how his fists flew! He is a man we had better kill, Jim. He may make trouble. He's capable of it."

"Morrow, don't you know me?"

"Give them the lash, Jim. Great Heaven! They'll have us yet. We'll feed wolves, man—wolves! Let 'em out! *Can't* you get any more speed out of 'em? Snow! Ha, ha! Curse it! Nothing but snow! Jim—*Jim*—JIM! Where the deuce are you? Snow! Good snow! I wonder if Jim is eating snow? Wagh! What devils they were! Snow!"

The voice was growing weaker. There was a pause of several minutes, during which it seemed as if Hadleigh must certainly hear the beating of my heart against the logs upon which I lay.

One or two moans came from the room underneath.

"Open your eyes, you fool! Do you know me?"

A pause.

"Hadleigh! *The dude!*"

The words startled us. Morrow had certainly awoke to consciousness. His words were now whispered. We could hear them but faintly.

"Where are the girls? Where is Julia, my promised wife? And where is the share of the gold I was to have?" asked Hadleigh.

I think all three of us were nerved up to something of this kind. We expected some such development as this when we left our boots downstairs and crept into the loft to listen. But, notwithstanding that fact, the shock brought by the words was very great.

"Where neither you nor I will ever get them again," whisperd Morrow. "Where am I?"

"*You* are at Fort Yukon. What I want to know is, where is Julia Marshall?"

"Have I been sick?" asked Morrow.

"A little."

"Who found me? Where was I? Oh, I remember—*snow—snow—snow!* Ha! Ha! Boiled snow! Baked snow! Every kind of snow, all bought by Bill Marshall's gold. Ha! Ha!"

He was gone again.

Three whiter faces were never seen than were ours, as we looked at each other.

Mr. Harby gave us the signal to go back.

We crept over the logs again, climbed down the ladder and went through to the "best room," where we had left our boots.

"Why did you come down, Mr. Harby?" I asked.

"I know the symptoms too well," he replied. "Had Morrow been allowed to sleep until he was thoroughly rested, he would have awoke with vigor and consciousness restored to him. But Hadleigh has interrupted his rest—has shattered the little nerve he had left, and now I fear he is gone for good. He had one little gleam of intelligence. It went, and I do not believe he will ever have another."

"Better change back to our boots again, to avoid suspicion," I said.

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Harby. "Do not let the vile wretch suspect that we have heard anything. Put on your boots again. I will put away the moccasins. He must not suspect. We *may* learn more."

We drew on our fur boots, and again looked as Hadleigh had seen us.

Mr. Harby took the moccasins and stepped from the room.

While he was gone Hadleigh came in, stepped to his old seat by the fire, and leaning forward, buried his face in his hands.

Mr. Harby returned, and shooting a glance at the silent man by the fire, he said:

"I think we had better go to Morrow's room now."

Hadleigh looked up.

"I thought you said you were going to let him sleep," he said.

"True," replied the missionary. "I shall not wake him, nor allow any one else to do it. But I must see if *he* has awakened himself, and if he needs anything."

"Oh!"

And Hadleigh's head dropped again into his hands.

We went to Morrow's room. Abnormal quiet reigned. Mrs. Harby opened the door. We could not hear even the sound of breathing.

Morrow lay on his pillow, his face, which had been white, now nearly purple.

Maxom felt his heart.

"He is dead," he said, looking solemnly into Mr. Harby's eyes and mine.

Finger-marks could be seen on Morrow's throat. It was evident that he had been choked to death.

"Yes, he is dead," quietly added Mr. Harby. "And with him dies all hope of learning where the girls are to be found."

"Unless Hadleigh knows," I said.

"Yes," answered Mr. Harby, "unless Hadleigh knows."

It was decided, after a brief consultation, to say nothing to Hadleigh, either about what we had overheard or our suspicion—

nay, our certainty—that he had killed Kirk Morrow.

We went back to Mrs. Harby's "best room," and found Hadleigh in the same position as when we had left him.

"Morrow is dead," I said, as soon as I had entered.

He raised his head. His face was pale.

"Dead?" he answered. "Couldn't pull up, eh?"

"Seemingly not," said Mr. Harby, "and it is much to be regretted, for now we have no way of learning anything about the girls."

"I have given them up," said Hadleigh.

"Do you intend to discontinue the search?" asked Mr. Harby, quietly.

"I see no way to continue it," was the reply. "I see no reason to risk our lives in this wilderness any longer. I say *our* lives. I speak only for myself. These men are accustomed to lives of hardship and danger. They may choose to continue a wild-goose chase. I do not."

I was full of contempt for this fellow. What *was* he? How deep were his villainies? What had he actually done, and what part of his evil deeds consisted of leaving something undone? I was certain that somehow or other he was an accomplice of the man he had just killed. But how were we to know the truth?

Tahnag came in and said:

"Indians ready. Start any time Bear-Hunter say. Go anywhere him say. Nirzih!"

"We shall start as soon as possible, Tahnag," said Maxom. "Are the sleds packed and dogs purchased?"

"Sleds packed, dogs waiting. No paid for. Leave that to you."

"Quite right," said Maxom.

"You are going to start, then, Maxom," said Mr. Harby, "without the least idea of the direction you should take."

"Yes," said Maxom. "We can do nothing by remaining here. So far as we can judge, Kirk Morrow came from the south. That, then, is the direction I am going to take. I have reasoned the thing out to my own satisfaction, but have not yet put my ideas before Lieutenant Wetmore. I would not take the step unless he was agreed with me as to its advisability."

"Your superior judgment in Alaskan matters leaves me nothing to advise—simply the pleasure of going with you, and working with you, no matter where, or what the difficulties may be."

"Thank you. My idea, then, is this. Somewhere, in the south, not more than two days' journey on foot from here, Kirk Morrow, Bryant and the girls have sustained some accident or injury. Morrow left them, starting off toward the north on foot, hoping to reach this place and obtain help for the others. Before he got here, he lost his rifle, hunger overtook him, he lost his way, snow-madness came on, and we know the result."

"There certainly *seems* to be reason in what you say," said Mr. Harby. "And there is no hazard in your undertaking, having, as you will, plenty of dogs and Indians. Yes, yes, I think myself, Maxom, you are right."

"I am convinced of it," I said.

"Then it is settled," said Maxom. "When we have enjoyed Mrs. Harby's good dinner, let us go."

At that moment there came to our ears great shouts and cries from the Indians outside.

"What under the sun has happened?" asked Mr. Harby.

"Let us see," said Maxom.

We stepped from the log-house, went through the door of the stockade, and found most of the Indians and white traders of "The Fort" congregated on the north side of the settlement, or the bank of the Porcupine River.

"What is the excitement, chief?" I asked, when I had found Tahnag.

His usually grim face was almost laughing.

"Brogabrond have heap fun," he said. "You know Brogabrond; him big two wife chief of Rats. Remember, we meet him when leave boat, and buy reindeer. You buy first, then Tahnag buys. That Brogabrond."

"Ah, yes," I replied, "I remember the old fellow well. He was out with his band rounding up some straying reindeer."

"Yes. That him. That Brogabrond. Come see Brogabrond come down Porcupine. Must have heap big news, Brogabrond. Come see."

We found Mr. Harby and Maxom standing on a little tongue of land that jutted out into the river.

They were looking up the stream, and on Mr. Harby's face there was a broad grin.

"What is it?" I asked, when I had joined them.

"Look," he said, pointing.

A score of large boats were to be seen far up the river, and from the looks, as far as I could tell at the distance, they were decorated as for some gala occasion.

We watched them, until they drew near enough for us to distinguish the decorations, and I did not wonder that Brogabrond's taste caused mirth.

The largest boat of all—that of the old chief himself—led the way, and first and foremost upon its bow was a dilapidated and dirty American flag, probably presented to the chief by some visiting army officer or exploring party from the *Corwin*.

Hanging over the bows of the boat were strips of bark on which the hand of the artist had been lavish with many-colored clays. Posts had been erected all around the sides of the boat, and from these hung great festoons of bark, fur, deer skin cut in strips, bunches of feathers, heads of birds, everything and anything, in fact, that could be gathered in that portion of Alaska, and used for the purpose.

The boats which followed were trimmed up in much the same style, lacking, of course, the flag.

"What is it all about?" I asked Mr. Harby.

"That I don't know," he replied. "Old Brogabrond is often given to vagaries of this kind, but I don't recall so large a procession before. You may rest assured that *this* occasion is an important one—at least in the eyes of Brogabrond himself."

As the boats of the Rats drew nearer we could hear the native drums being pounded with extraordinary energy, and the voices of scores of Indians in a loud and not particularly pleasing tune.

"It's a joy song," said Mr. Harby. "There will, no doubt, be great doings here to-night. When old Brogabrond takes it into his head to do something big, he invariably succeeds beyond our expectations. But I'd like to know what this is all about."

"There is evidently much excitement aboard Brogabrond's boat," said Maxom. "I see the old chief himself standing up, and pointing this way."

"Heads are turned this way," I said. "Even the paddlers seem to be affected, whatever may be the cause."

There was stretched across the bow of the Rat chief's boat a screen of skins. There seemed to be some one behind that screen, hidden from our sight, but to whom Brogabrond was paying marked attention. And then I saw—or thought I did—some one looking over the screen, but the heads disappeared again quickly.

"What is the song about, chief?" I asked Tahnag, when the boats had got near enough for one who knew the language to recognize the words.

The Kotch-a-Kutchin grinned.

"Same tune," he said. "All time Rats sing same tune. Heap big chief, Brogabrond, heap big warrior all Rats. No Indian like Rats, no village like Rat village. Big boast song. That what Brogabrond sing all time. Sing what heap big friend white man have in Brogabrond. Me know Brogabrond. Good Indian. Big boast. Him honest, Brogabrond no do harm. Bear-Hunter like Brogabrond. Tahnag like Brogabrond. No have trouble only when Rat chief say Rat Indian better than Kutchin. No like *that*. All Indian think he tribe the best."

"All men are alike in that respect, chief," I said. "Among white men the same spirit is usually found. The American sings 'America,' and thinks his flag the superior of any that waves. The Englishman is much like our approaching friend, Brogabrond, and never hesitates to boast of his country, his cities, his colonies, his warships and his patriotism. So with the Frenchman. So with the German. No, Brogabrond does not stand alone. But he is almost here. See his face. It is fairly illumined with Indian pride. He *must* have performed some great deed."

The bow of Brogabrond's boat was directed squarely toward the tongue of land upon which we stood.

"What is the rascal going to do?" I asked. "Run us down?"

Mr. Harby stood watching the approaching gala-boats with an amused smile. Turning, he saw his wife in the background, and called her to him.

"Come," he said. "Old Brogabrond is giving us a treat to-day. Come where you can take it all in."

A tremendous shove on the paddles now sent the boat of Brogabrond toward us with a mighty rush. It grated upon the pebbly shore, then ran its nose high upon land.

Instantaneously the songs of the Indians were hushed.

Not a drum was beaten.

Brogabrond stood erect, proud and smiling, his great head-dress of feathers waving like the plumes of some great conqueror.

The screen in the bow of the boat fell suddenly down.

"Darby!"

"Fred!"

I stood fairly petrified with astonishment. Could it be? Impossible. No, there they were, as beautiful as ever, smilingly calling to us. The girls we feared were dead—the girls we had travelled over miles of snow to find.

In an instant Maxom had Julia in his arms and was smothering her with kisses. I was not a second behind him, and I cannot—would not, if I could—put on paper the holy thrills I felt when my darling wound her plump arms around my neck and kissed me. Nor would I put on paper all the sweet things we said.

We turned to Mr. Harby, to go through the totally unnecessary ceremony of an introduction.

He was down on his knees—down in the snow—sending a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the restoration of the girls.

Julia and Madge, hearing their names, knelt beside him and joined in the thanksgiving. And I am proud to tell it of my friend Maxom and myself that we, too, felt the Divine interference for the good of all, and the prints of *our* knees were not wanting in the snow.

It was a scene that I cannot describe, because there was so much of it.

There were the glad voices of Maxom and myself, in words of love and tenderness, inquiring as to how the girls came into the hands of Brogabrond. There were the voices of Mr. Harby and his wife, talking, laughing, rejoicing with us in our great good fortune.

There were the voices of the girls as they laughed and cried, trying to speak to each of us and answer all of our questions at once. There were the shouts and hurrahs of the fur-traders, the shouts and songs of the Indians who had broken out afresh. The barking of many dogs, aroused into nervous activity by the unusual demonstration.

"Hi! Look!" said Tahnag.

We followed his gaze.

Brogabrond was issuing a command. Two of his Indians lifted a box from the boat, and came toward us with it.

"What's that?" asked Maxom.

"The gold," said Julia. "Even that is safe, and, oh! Darby, in our own joy we are forgetting our poor father. Was he killed? They said he was."

There were tears in the eyes of both girls as they waited for an answer.

"No, he was not killed," said Maxom. "He was severely wounded, but when we left Circle City he was in good hands, and Doctor Farrell said he was in a fair way to recover. No doubt he is waiting and watching now, counting each day an age until he sees you."

"Dear papa!" murmured Madge.

"And now," said Mr. Harby, raising his voice, to be heard above the tumult, "let us get into the house and get at some sort of an understanding about this thing. I am as much in the dark as if you had fallen from the moon. Tahnag, bring Chief Brogabrond, who has really outdone himself this time, and get inside."

So, followed by the two chiefs and the Indians carrying the box of gold, we entered the log house of the missionary again.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 7.]

WILLFUL PENELOPE.*

BY EFFIE ADELAIDE ROWLANDS,

Author of "A Conqueror of Fate," "Little Kit," "At a Great Cost."

["WILLFUL PENELOPE" was commenced in No. 48. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the Newsdealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

CHAPTER XXI.

MRS. ROCHDALE'S well-thought-out plans for her niece's future met with what she justly considered the most unmerited failure and disappointment.

Penelope received her aunt very cordially, and accepted her affectionate advances without *arrière pensée*, although Mrs. Rochdale's love appeared to have had a tremendous stimulant in the news of the fortune that had come to her niece.

"But, my dear Penelope," she said, as she sat in the dark study and looked at her niece standing by the fire, a graceful figure in her black gown—"but, my dear Penelope!" she remonstrated. It was all she could find to say.

She had never anticipated the smallest difficulty with Penelope. It had seemed to her wisdom there could be no two questions about the matter.

Penelope, with her appearance and her money, must, of course, take her place in society, and with whom could she take that place so well or so desirably, in every sense of the word, as with her maternal aunt?

Starting under Mrs. Rochdale's care and guidance, having the *entrée* to the very smartest set, possessing such more than satisfactory attributes as wealth and beauty, it would be well-nigh impossible for Penelope to do anything but achieve success in the most comprehensive sense of the word.

Mrs. Rochdale had allowed herself to be both excited, interested and soothed by the thought of the future, immediate and otherwise, which spread before her the instant she heard of Penelope's good fortune.

Life would have a new zest under these changed circumstances. The glory and satisfaction that had accompanied Marcia's marriage had had time to fade by now; and, indeed, Mrs. Rochdale was conscious of a sense of peevish discontent when she dwelt on the subject of her daughter.

Marcia had not given her mother much attention since she had become Mrs. Latimar. She had never been a demonstrative or even a sympathetic companion; but Mrs. Rochdale had not fathomed to the full the mean limits and nature of her child's heart until after Marcia had become independent of her.

The quarrels, the unhappy atmosphere that pervaded the domestic life at Latimar Court, were a source of real trouble to Penelope's aunt.

She was not a very noble character, as has been told before. She was frivolous, scheming, selfish, a real hard woman of the world; but there ran in her veins some of the same blood as had lived in her gentle sister, Marian Desborough, and with all her faults Mrs. Rochdale had a few good points which made her immeasurably superior to her daughter.

There was, too, a plebeian touch about Marcia, coming from her father's side, which showed itself in actions and words that never would have escaped her mother.

Mrs. Rochdale had never experienced real disappointment over Marcia till now; the brilliant marriage had been nothing less than a triumph when it occurred, but that was over.

It was the knowledge of the absolute failure of this marriage, none the less so for being unknown, that had given Mrs. Rochdale such unpleasant moments through the past year and that made her heart thrill with a flash of pleasure when she pictured a future with Penelope under her care.

Although Marcia was her own child, and dearer to her than most people would have believed, Julia Rochdale was too clever, too keen and had too much knowledge of true pride not to realize that Penelope would never, never develop into the sort of woman who now reigned at Latimar Court.

The remembrance of Penelope's almost indescribable love and devotion to her mother had a sweetness to her worldly aunt which was, perhaps, hardly confessed to herself.

Be that as it might, it must be said that Mrs. Rochdale had an honest pleasure in the thought of having her niece under her care, although it must also be said that it is very doubtful whether she would have paid Penelope such a visit as she was now paying, or laid before her such a series of plans for immediate and future action, if she had not become aware of the fortune which Hartwick Desborough had left behind him.

It was, therefore, with unconcealed dismay and disappointment that Mrs. Rochdale found that Penelope had not the faintest intention of following her plans or falling in with her wishes.

Penelope, in fact, had already a distinct plan and several wishes of her own, which she stated quietly though firmly to her aunt would be carried out as soon as possible.

Mrs. Rochdale had turned her well-darkened eyes on her niece.

"But, my dear Penelope," she said, "what you intend to do is so foolish—so very impossible."

"I don't see the impossibility, Aunt Julia," said Penelope. "In fact, everything seems to shape very easily, much more so than I expected. See, here is the letter I had this morning from Mr. Blackstone, who has the management of all poor Uncle Hartwick's affairs. You will see that he says Thicket Croft can be ready for me in a week. The place has been empty for a long time; in fact, I believe the last tenants left it nearly a year ago, but it is in good repair and seems very comfortable."

Mrs. Rochdale's disappointment grew more decided at the sound of determination that rang out in each tone of Penelope's clear voice.

"But, my dear child," she expostulated, "this is all very well, but really, don't you see yourself that such a life is not the life for a young girl with—with such possibilities as you have before you. Of course, I never thought you would hesitate to make your home with me. If Lucie were in England, it would be another matter, but now that Walter has accepted this appointment in India, the question of your sister as a chaperon is finally settled. You cannot live alone, Penelope, you know. Why not! Oh, my dear, you really cannot be in earnest. It is so preposterous—so—so—"

Mrs. Rochdale actually failed to find a suitable word.

Penelope smiled faintly.

"If I were about to start housekeeping in London or in any fashionable town, I grant you it would be impossible, Aunt Julia; but in the country—"

Mrs. Rochdale broke in hurriedly:

"There is absolutely no difference—none whatever. Town or country, a girl like you, young, with your appearance, cannot live by herself."

"I shall not be by myself. I shall have a house full of women-servants, and a housekeeper who has known me all my life; my uncle's old butler, Downs, will go with me, and—"

"Of course, if you like to make fun of me and despise my offer, Penelope—"

Penelope hastened to soothe her aunt's ruffled spirit. She was not impressed by the visit as Mrs. Rochdale had imagined she would have been; but, all the same, her quick sympathy sorted out the good from the worldly motives, and, as a natural sequence, Penelope was quick to acknowledge this good.

"I do not despise your offer, dear Aunt Julia," she answered, "nor am I making fun of you. I am grateful to you for your thought of me, and only sorry I must give you disappointment. I have no wish to make a start in the world. I should not be happy in London, Aunt Julia. I have always lived in the country. Even in Paris I lived beyond the city. I am a country mouse, and I shall only be happy in the country. Now, starting with that, don't you see how easily things fall into their

---

* Copyright, 1895, by ROBERT BONNER'S SONS. All rights reserved.

place? Part of my property is in land, and Thicket Croft is the very ideal of a home for me."

"But to live there alone—to bury yourself in the depths of a desert! Penelope, you must think of your future. It is all very well having beauty and a fortune, but how do you expect you will ever find a husband if you shut yourself up in this fashion?"

Penelope flushed suddenly crimson.

"I shall never, never marry!" she said, in a quick, low voice; then, before her aunt could speak, she turned and took a photograph from the mantel shelf beside her.

"Look, here is a picture of Thicket Croft. Is it not a pretty place, Aunt Julia? You will indorse that opinion, I am sure, when you come down and stay with me, as I hope you will do very, very often. I went down for my first inspection yesterday with Mr. Blackstone, and I was charmed with my property."

Mrs. Rochdale put up her gold eye-glasses, but before she looked at the photograph she gave one shrewd, sharp glance at her niece's face, on which the flush still lingered. The sight of that face gave a thrill of satisfaction to her ruffled spirit.

"Ah, I thought there was something below the surface!" she said to herself. "Never, never marry! Who is it, I wonder? Some one she met in Paris—a flirtation on his part, taken in all seriousness by her. How strange I never had an inkling of this before. It certainly puts a different complexion on things. For all her gentleness and sweetness Penelope is a strong-willed young person, and life would have been something of a trial with this specter of an unhappy love always in the foreground. There is nothing so disheartening and tiresome as a girl with a sentimental sorrow; and Penelope has got it pretty deeply, I can see. She is not the ordinary young Miss who falls in love a dozen times a month! Perhaps, after all, it will be a wise plan to let her have her own way without any more fuss!"

All this passed fleetly through Mrs. Rochdale's active brain, while she glanced at the photograph in her hand.

"It certainly looks well in a picture," she said, not seeming, or allowing Penelope to guess, that she had remarked anything strange in the anti-matrimonial statement the girl had made, or in the flush that had accompanied this statement—"almost a mansion. You will feel like a queen down there, Penelope."

Penelope was delighted to find her aunt beginning to accept the situation.

"I mean to be comfortable, at all events," she answered, with a smile and a sigh. "I only regret so much," she added, wistfully, "that poor Uncle Hartwick did not live to go there with me. It was a plan we had discussed all last year, and he had looked forward to it so much. We should have been so happy."

Mrs. Rochdale shut her eye-glass, with half a smile at the speaker.

"I believe you really were fond of that extraordinary old person, Penelope."

Penelope answered immediately.

"I was more than fond—I loved him!" she said, with a touch of truth in face and voice.

"Well, he certainly has redeemed himself in my eyes since his death," confessed Mrs. Rochdale. And then she fell to discussing all Penelope's plans.

"I wonder you are not a little alarmed at taking the responsibility of such a big establishment on your shoulders," she said, when Penelope had given her a few more details.

"I am a born manager," the girl said, lightly; "I mean to establish quite an old-fashioned country house. I shall have hop-feasts and yule logs, and all the traditional things; and then think, Aunt Julia, what a nice arrangement it will be for Lucie when she comes home on the occasional visits she speaks of. I have already written out to her and told her to regard Thicket Croft as a nursery for all her babies as they come!"

Mrs. Rochdale rose to go. Disappointed as she was, she began to feel that Penelope would have been a very difficult and anxious care had things gone as she desired.

"You will hunt, I suppose?" she said. "Why not let Denis get your horses? He is in town now, I believe, at least I know he said something about coming to Tattersall's."

Penelope put a gigantic constraint on herself.

"Oh! I will not trouble Denis. I have engaged old John Fellowes—you won't remember him, of course—from Stevenstone, as my head groom, and he will look after everything."

"You are a most independent young woman, Miss Penelope!" Mrs. Rochdale said with a laugh, "but no doubt you are right, after all. The main thing, my dear child, is to be happy if you can, and I am sure I wish you that good fortune with all my heart."

It was not until Mrs. Rochdale was just going that Penelope mentioned Marcia.

"I hope she is stronger," she said, gently and earnestly. Indeed there was nothing but pity in Penelope's heart for her cousin, for she knew that Marcia could never be absolutely happy; even had Denis loved her with all the strength and vigor of his love, Marcia's nature would have turned the love aside, and prepared misery for herself in some form or other.

Mrs. Rochdale's face clouded at mention of her daughter.

"She is much better, and would be quite well, only she suffers from such terrible depression of spirits. Of course, she is grieving over the poor little baby, as we all do; but sitting moping in a corner all day will do her no good, and will not bring the baby back to her. I wish she would rouse herself for Denis's sake. Young wives should remember the best of husbands are but mortal, and if the home is not made bright and happy, why—" and then Mrs. Rochdale broke off this sententious strain, and her voice was more earnest than Penelope had ever heard it before.

"Penelope," she said, "I will confess to you I am troubled about Marcia. I feel there is something wrong somewhere. Marcia was always an odd temper, and what one might call a little difficult, and I am so afraid sometimes she is not—not quite wise with Denis. I can say nothing, however, for Marcia is most intolerant of any interference, yet I feel a few judicious words might put things right. She has some mistaken ideas about Denis, my dear. He is an angel to her. Of course this is all in confidence, Penelope; but I am sure you will sympathize with all I feel, do you not?"

Penelope bowed her head.

How each word stabbed her to the heart—this continually recurring story of the misery that was his daily, hourly portion! Oh! of a surety Penelope felt the burden of regret and remorse grow almost too heavy to be borne. She was unjust to herself really in the matter of Denis, for, after all, though she had willfully set his love on one side by disappointment and disillusionment, she certainly had not driven him into his marriage with Marcia. It had been a series of mistakes, arising no doubt from her girlish recklessness and folly; but, after all, Denis had been no boy, and the big, the terrible mistake he had made in the question of his marriage rested on his shoulders and his alone.

Penelope's tender love and grief for him, however, would not let this be so. The blame of all his unhappiness she accepted, and for whatever evils lay before him in the future she held herself responsible.

Mrs. Rochdale, of course, could not possibly follow the bent of her niece's thoughts as she stood silent before her; but something in the sweet gravity of Penelope's young beauty touched her in her highest part.

"Perhaps if Marcia had some nice woman friend in whom she could confide and find sympathy and good counsel, things would soon mend; but, you know, Marcia never made any warm friendships. I think, however, she really likes you, Penelope, and if—"

"Oh, it would be impossible!" broke from Penelope, quickly. "I mean," she said, drawing her breath sharply and speaking hurriedly to explain her words—"I mean, Aunt Julia, that I have literally no power of such a sort. Please don't think me unkind or wrong when I say I fear Marcia does not care for me very much." Penelope was thinking of the days she had spent in London on that bygone visit. Of Marcia's developed hatred and jealousy she had no suspicion—never imagining for one single instant that the history of that brief, unspoken love was known to any other soul save Denis and herself. "Marcia considers me a little girl, and would, I am certain, resent anything I said very strongly. I—I would rather not interfere," she finished, not very distinctly.

Mrs. Rochdale sighed.

"I did not mean you to interfere. I meant only that you should give Marcia a little advice, a few hints; but perhaps you are right. I hope I am only over-anxious. I can't help worrying about the matter just a little bit—that is only natural. Well, Penelope, I must run away now; I am glad to have seen you, although I must say I am not quite pleased with you. I don't approve of this scheme of burying yourself in the country for the rest of your natural life; but, after all, you are not a fool, and no doubt you would not do this if you did not want to do it. I hope all will go as well as you expect; I shall come and pay you an early visit, and I shall be very glad to assume the *rôle* of chaperon on any occasion when you think you may require one."

With that, Mrs. Rochdale kissed her niece with real affection, and drove away from the dingy old house in her smart carriage.

Penelope sat lost in painful thought long after her aunt's departure. The vision of Denis's uncomfortable home was never absent from her mind's eye.

Somehow, with all her fine, handsome appearance, Penelope had never been quite able to associate her cousin with the dignity of mistress of Latimar Court.

Marcia was showy, and passed with a certain brilliancy in the world, but to Penelope's delicate refinement there had always been a something about Marcia that had never been convincing, and to imagine such a woman as sovereign in that old-world home was an incongruity—if not an impossibility.

All this, however, though it might vaguely hurt her sense of artistic fitness, would have been in a way a trouble.

Maybe another woman chosen out of Marcia's set, and of her caliber, would have failed to fit her position in the way she had.

It was the remembrance of Marcia's nature, her mean, narrow mind, her selfish heart, her suspicious, doubting self that appalled Penelope when she put facts straight in front of her, and realized that it was to this character, with this nature, Denis Latimar had allied himself, and with whom he had to pass the rest of his life.

Denis was young, and so was Marcia. A long vista of years stretched before them in the most natural course of events: out of that period of sojourning together only one year was passed, and yet what a pitiful history was inscribed already on the annals of their life! If things at the very beginning had gone so badly, what would be the end?

This was the thought, shaping itself into a fear that lived with Penelope night and day.

CHAPTER XXII.

The arrival of Penelope Desborough at the old-fashioned country house bequeathed to her by her uncle was, as may be supposed, a subject for much comment, chatter and speculation in the neighborhood around. The intelligence that Miss Desborough was very young, extremely pretty, and slightly unconventional was not long in making its way about. Matrons and old heads were a little dubious at first. It was really a very strange arrangement, they opined, a young girl living alone in a big house like Thicket Croft, going her way in the most independent fashion, conducting her house and establishment as easily and as successfully as though she had had half a dozen chaperons and as many brothers to advise and assist her.

Several of these perplexed individuals paused before committing themselves by calling on the girl-mistress of Thicket Croft; but their troubled minds were at once set at rest when it became known that old Lady Susan Verschoyle had actually braved the dangers of the east wind to drive a couple of miles to drink tea with Miss Desborough in her cozy hall.

Lady Susan was the social barometer of ——shire, and what she did, so did all the rest of the world around and about her country home.

Penelope's position was at once assured, although the girl had not troubled herself in the very least about her neighbors or about their possible opinion or non-opinion.

She was very busy on the afternoon of Lady Susan's visit. A whole van load of rugs and curtains and draperies had arrived from Liberty's and some of the other big London shops; and swathed in a brown holland apron, her pretty feet planted firmly on the top of some steps, her hammer working away like magic, while Kate and Downs below quarreled fiercely in whispers when they were not giving their attention to their mistress, Penelope was scarcely in the smartest trim when her housekeeper, who was her faithful Kate's mother, announced the arrival of her first guest.

She received Lady Susan with a blush and an excuse, but her visitor had fallen in love with her at once.

"I was told I should find a most charming little creature," she said, by and by, when tea had been brought, "and I was quite prepared to be pleased, for I have a lively recollection of your mother, Miss Desborough, and I remember I thought her one of the sweetest women I had ever met!"

Any word about her mother touched the most vital part of Penelope's heart.

"I think I remember I have heard her speak of you, Lady Susan," she said, her lips trembling a little, for time had not yet cured her grief. "You used to stay at Latimar Court, did you not?"

Lady Susan assented.

"Paul Latimar was my nephew. I am Denis's greataunt, and I have a very strong affection for him. I have seen very little of him of late years, owing to my many years of residence abroad. My poor husband could not stand the English climate, and we were compelled to live in search of perpetual sunshine; so, you see, to a certain extent the Latimars and myself drifted apart; but I was deeply attached to both Paul and his wife; and, as a boy, I think Denis was the dearest little chap in the world."

Penelope bent her head over the tea-cups and said nothing. She was trembling a little from the effect of Lady Susan's words. She knew now how the warmth of Denis's love for her had found a vent, had discovered a means of doing something to please her and to benefit her; for Penelope had learned through Mrs. Rochdale that Lady Susan was the one important person in ——shire, and knew the value such a friendship must mean for her. She would have been attracted to her visitor under any circumstances, for Lady Susan was just the sweet, refined gentlewoman that appealed most to the girl's admiration; but coming, as she did, with the influence of Denis's thoughts about her, Penelope felt almost a love for the silver-haired old lady.

They talked a long while, and chiefly about Penelope's plans for her house and for her future life.

"You are young to be alone, my child," Lady Susan said; but she did not speak reprovingly. "You must learn to run over to me now and then. I am sorry to say I cannot always venture out in these early spring days, but we are not far apart, and in a trap or on horseback—"

"I am afraid I shall be a nuisance, I shall come so often," Penelope said, with a smile, and yet with a moisture in her wonderful blue eyes.

"You will always be welcome, my dear," was the gentle, earnest reply; "and then you must make use of me. I know a little about the people around here, and I can direct you if you need any help in the matter of choosing your acquaintances. Oh, I am not at all kind! If you were not Margaret Latimar's godchild and Denis's little friend, I am sure I should do just as much. Your face is your recommendation, my dear; I have fallen in love with you."

Penelope made reply to this in her prettiest fashion, and then something moved her, urged her to speak of him.

"Have—have you seen Denis lately?" she asked. "Is he well?"

"I had a flying visit from him about a week or ten days ago," Lady Susan said, rising to depart. "He came before you arrived, and chiefly, I think, to tell me about you. I suppose, however, you go frequently to the Court. I have not been there since Denis brought his wife home. We met in town one day, and we did not—how shall I say it?—well," the old lady laughed, "Mrs. Denis Latimar is not quite sympathetic to me. I don't exactly understand—" and Lady Susan paused and frowned; she remembered all at once that Denis had said that Penelope was related to his wife. "My dear," the old lady said, "I hope I do not offend you with my plain speaking; I forgot for the moment that Mrs. Denis was connected with you. There is, most assuredly, nothing in you to recall association with her; and now may I have a peep at your arrangements? Dear me, how I used to revel in upholstering when I was young! Give me a hammer and a box of nails and a very wide window to drape, and I was happy, though we had very little scope in my young days for all these picturesque effects. You are quite an artist! Everything is charming!"

Mrs. Rochdale, of course, heard in some roundabout way of Lady Susan's early visit to Thicket Croft.

She was down at Latimar Court again for a few days when this news came. Marcia had not invited her mother, and, indeed, she gave Mrs. Rochdale very faint encouragement to repeat these little journeys from town.

She felt that her mother had a motive in coming so often, and she resented what she was pleased to call such impertinence, the while she was made furious by the open and hearty warmth with which Denis always welcomed his wife's mother to his house.

"He is glad of her to come because she is an excuse for him to go off and leave us alone together," Marcia thought, in her sullen, suspicious way.

And, in fact, there was a great element of truth in the thought, although it was not for this reason alone that Denis was glad to see Mrs. Rochdale arrive at the Court.

Men, however deeply they grieve and suffer, cannot live perpetually in an atmosphere of sorrow and shade. They do not forget, and in the night hours, or in some gap in an hour of amusement, the trouble will rear its head and be recognized in its full value; but a man, when he is well and strong and free from morbid fancies, can still enjoy a cheerful, pleasant life, no matter how deeply he may have been wounded.

Marcia's greatest fault and folly in her dealing with her husband was the perpetual gloom with which she permeated their mutual existence.

Denis might have almost found an excuse for her jealousy and temper now and then if he had seen her make some slight effort to please him, some attempt to be bright and happy, to take a prominent part in the interests and amusements which she knew he liked; if, in fact, she had been anything but what she was, a woman consumed with the most unworthy suspicions and doubts, tortured by senseless jealousy, ready to fall instantly into the most unreasoning and painful anger, a sullen woman sitting like a figure of stone, sometimes for days in succession, at their solitary meals, a perpetual source of discomfort and depression.

Had she showed the smallest tact, the faintest intimation of a true woman's nature and heart, had she made the very least overtures to his sympathy and to his tenderness, Marcia Latimar could have been almost a happy woman. Denis was so ready to see good in her, to reciprocate that good, to live not only in peace, but in pleasant fellowship and communion with his wife, to try and atone in any way for the vital fact that he did not love her as he should have done, that Marcia would have found it an easy task to win for herself a life with him which, if lacking the deeper, stronger bond, would yet have been a life with a sunshine and gladness that might have made her almost a queen.

Marcia, however, did none of these things; the faintest grain of philosophy was absent altogether from her composition, and she had no intention of being contented and satisfied with the real affection Denis could have given her by degrees when she knew that his love could never be hers. Hence the reason that Denis was always glad to see Mrs. Rochdale. She was not only a relief from the heavy depression produced by Marcia's most ill-judged manner, but she exerted herself in every way to be a companion and to supply the deficiencies of her daughter to the best of her power.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 7.]

◆

NOTICE TO OLD SUBSCRIBERS.

Watch the yellow label on the wrapper of your *Ledger*, as the date printed on it indicates the time your subscription expires. We will discontinue sending the *Ledger* at the expiration of your subscription. If you renew promptly you will not only insure your *Ledger* coming to you every week without delay, but it will be a great convenience and assistance to the publishers of the *Ledger* in keeping their subscription list.

IN BORROWED PLUMES.*

BY W. W. JACOBS.

CHAPTER I.

The master of the *Sarah Jane* had been missing for two days, and all on board, with the exception of the boy, whom nobody troubled about, were full of joy at the circumstance. Twice before had the skipper, whose habits might, perhaps, be best described as irregular, missed his ship, and word had gone forth that the third time would be the last. His berth was a good one, and the mate wanted it in place of his own, which was wanted by Ted Jones, A. B.

"Two hours more," said the mate, anxiously, to the men as they stood leaning against the side, "and I take the ship out."

"Under two hours'll do it," said Ted, peering over the side and watching the water as it slowly rose over the mud. "What's got the old man, I wonder?"

"I don't know and I don't care," said the mate. "You chaps stand by me, and it'll be good for all of us. Mr. Pearson said distinct the last time that if the skipper ever missed his ship again it would be his last trip in her, and he told me afore the old man that I wasn't to wait two minutes at any time, but to bring her out right away."

"He's an old fool," said Bill Loch, the other hand; "and nobody'll miss him but the boy, an' he's been looking reg'lar worried all the morning. He looked so worried at dinner-time that I give 'im a kick to cheer him up a bit. Look at him now."

The mate gave a supercilious glance in the direction of the boy, and then turned away. The boy, who had no idea of courting observation, stowed himself away behind the windlass, and taking a letter from his pocket, perused it for the fourth time.

"DEAR TOMMY,"—it began—"I take my pen in 'and to inform you that Ime staying here and cant git away for the reason that I lorst my cloes at cribage larst night, also my money, and everything beside. Dont speek to a living sole about it as the mate wants my birth, but pack up sum cloes and bring them to me without saying nuthing to noboddy. The mates cloths will do becos I havent got enny other soot, dont tell 'im. You needen't trouble about soks as I've got them left. My hed is so bad I must now conclude, Your affecshunate uncle and captin Joe Bross. P. S. Dont let the mate see you come, or else he wont let you go."

"Two hours more!" sighed Tommy, as he put the letter back in his pocket. "How can I get any clothes when they're all locked up? And aunt said I was to look after 'im and see he didn't git into no mischief."

He sat thinking deeply, and then as the crew of the *Sarah Jane* stepped ashore to take advantage of a glass offered by the mate, he crept down to the cabin again for another desperate look around. The only articles of clothing visible belonged to Mrs. Bross, who, up to this trip, had been sailing in the schooner to look after its master. At these he gazed hard.

"I'll take 'em an' try an' swop 'em for some men's clothes," said he, suddenly, snatching the garments from the pegs. "She wouldn't mind;" and hastily rolling them into a parcel, together with a pair of carpet slippers of the captain's, thrust the lot into an old biscuit bag. Then he shouldered his burden, and going cautiously on deck, gained the shore, and set off at a trot to the house where the captain was staying.

It was a long way, and the bag was heavy. His first attempt at barter was alarming, for the pawnbroker, who had just been cautioned by the police, was in such a severe and uncomfortable state of morals that the boy hastily snatched up his bundle again and left. Sorely troubled, he walked hastily along, until in a small by-street his glance fell upon a baker of mild and benevolent aspect standing behind the counter of his shop.

"If you please, sir," said Tommy, entering and depositing his bag on the counter, "have you got any cast-off clothes you don't want?"

The baker turned to a shelf, and, selecting a stale loaf cut it in halves, one of which he placed before the boy.

"I don't want bread," said Tommy, desperately; "but mother has just died, and father wants mourning for the funeral. He's only got a new suit with him, and if he can change these things of mother's for an old suit, he'd sell his best one's to bury her with."

He shook the articles out on the counter, and the baker's wife, who had just come into the shop, inspected them rather favorably.

"Poor boy, so you lost your mother!" she said, turning the clothes over. "It's a good skirt, Bill."

"Yes, ma'am," said Tommy, dolefully.

"What did she die of?" inquired the baker.

"Scarlet fever," said Tommy, tearfully mentioning the only disease he knew.

"Scar— Take them things away!" yelled the baker, pushing the clothes on to the floor, and following his wife to the other end of the shop. "Take 'em away directly, you young villain!"

His voice was so loud, his manner so imperative, that the startled boy, without stopping to argue, stuffed the clothes pell-mell into the bag again and departed. A farewell glance at the clock made him look almost as horrified as the baker.

"There's no time to be lost," he muttered as he began to run. "Either the old man'll have to come in these, or else stay where he is."

He reached the house breathless, and paused before an unshaven man in timeworn greasy clothes, who was smoking a short clay pipe with much enjoyment in front of the door.

"Is Cap'n Bross here?" he panted.

"He's upstairs," said the man, with a leer, "sitting in sackcloth and ashes—more ashes than sackcloth. Have you got some clothes for him?"

"Look here," said Tommy. He was down on his knees with the mouth of the bag open again, quite in the style of the practiced hawker. "Give me an old suit of clothes for them. Hurry up! There's a lovely frock!"

"Blimey," said the man, staring. "I've only got these clothes. Wot d'yer take me for? A dook?"

"Well, get me some somewhere," said Tommy. "If you don't, the cap'n'll have to come in these, and I'm sure he won't like it."

"I wonder what he'd look like," said the man, with a grin. "Hang me if I don't come up and see."

"Get me some clothes," pleaded Tommy.

"I wouldn't get you clothes, no, not for fifty pun," said the man, severely. "Wot d'yer mean wanting to spoil people's pleasure in that way? Come on, come and tell cap'n what you've got for 'im; I want to 'ear what he ses. He's been swearing 'ard since ten o'clock this morning, but he ought to say something special over this."

He led the way up the bare wooden stairs, followed by the harassed boy, and entered a small, dirty room at the top, in the center of which the master of the *Sarah Jane* sat to deny visitors, in a pair of socks and last week's paper.

"Here's a young gent come to bring you some clothes, Cap'n," said the man, taking the sack from the boy.

"Why didn't you come before?" growled the captain, who was reading the advertisements.

The man put his hand in the sack, and pulled out the clothes.

"What do you think of 'em?" he asked, expectantly.

The captain strove vainly to tell him, but his tongue mercifully forsook its office and dried between his lips. His brain rang with sentences of scorching iniquity, but they got no farther.

"Well, say thank you, if you can't say nothing else," suggested his tormentor, hopefully.

"I couldn't bring nothing else," said Tommy, hurriedly; "all the things was locked up. I tried to swop 'em and nearly got locked up for it. Put these on and hurry up."

The captain moistened his lips with his tongue.

"The mate'll get off directly she floats," continued Tommy. "Put these on and spoil his little game. It's raining a little now. Nobody'll see you, and as soon as you git aboard you can borrow some of the men's clothes."

"That's the ticket, Cap'n," said the man. "Lord lumme, you'll 'ave everybody fallin' in love with you."

"Hurry up," said Tommy, dancing with impatience. "Hurry up."

The skipper, dazed and wild-eyed, stood still while his two assistants hastily dressed him, bickering somewhat about details as they did so.

"He ought to be tight-laced, I tell you," said the man,

"He can't be tight-laced without stays," said Tommy, scornfully. "You ought to know that."

"Ho, can't he?" said the other, discomfited. "You know too much for a youngun. Well, put a bit o' line round 'im, then."

"We can't wait for a line," said Tommy, who was standing on tiptoe to tie the skipper's bonnet on. "Now tie the scarf over his chin to hide his beard, and stitch this veil on. It's a good job he ain't got a mustache."

The other complied, and then fell back a pace or two to gaze at his handiwork.

"Strewth, though I ses it as shouldn't, you look a treat," he remarked, complacently. "Now, young un, take hold of his arm. Go up the back streets, and if you see anybody looking at you, call him 'Mar.'"

The two set off, after the man, who was a born realist, had tried to snatch a kiss from the skipper on the threshold. Fortunately for the success of the venture, it was pelting with rain, and though a few people gazed curiously at the couple as they went hastily along, they were unmolested, and gained the wharf in safety, arriving just in time to see the schooner shoving off from the side.

At the sight the skipper held up his skirts and ran.

"Ahoy!" he shouted. "Wait a minute."

The mate gave one look of blank astonishment at the extraordinary figure and then turned away, but at that moment the stern came within jumping distance of the wharf and uncle and nephew, moved with one impulse, leaped for it and gained the deck in safety.

"Why didn't you wait when I hailed you?" demanded the skipper, fiercely.

"How was I to know it was you!" inquired the mate, surlily, as he realized his defeat. "I thought it was the Empress of Rooshia."

The skipper stared at him dumbly.

"An' if you take my advice," said the mate, with a sneer, "you'll keep them things on. *I* never see you look so well in anything afore."

"I want to borrow some o' your clothes, Bob," said the skipper, eying him steadily.

"Where's your own?" asked the other.

"I don't know," said the skipper. "I was took with a fit last night, Bob, and when I woke up this morning they were gone. Somebody must have took advantage of my helpless state and taken 'em."

"Very likely," said the mate, turning away to shout an order to the crew, who were busy setting sail.

"Where are they, old man?" inquired the skipper.

"How should I know?" asked the man, becoming interested in the men again.

"I mean *your* clothes," said the skipper, who was fast losing temper.

"Oh, mine?" said the mate. "Well, as a matter o' fact, I don't like lending my clothes. I'm rather pertickler. You might have a fit in *them*."

"You won't lend 'em to me?" asked the skipper.

"I won't," said the mate, speaking loudly, and frowning significantly at the crew, who were listening.

"Very good," said the skipper. "Ted, come here. Where's your other clothes?"

"I'm very sorry, sir," said Ted, shifting uneasily from one leg to the other, and glancing at the mate for support, "but they ain't fit for the likes of you to wear, sir."

"I'm the best judge of that," said the skipper, sharply. "Fetch 'em up."

"Well, to tell the truth, sir," said Ted, "I'm like the mate. I'm only a poor sailorman, but I wouldn't lend my clothes to the Queen of England."

"You fetch them clothes," roared the skipper, snatching off his bonnet and flinging it on the deck. "Fetch 'em up at once. D'ye think I'm going about in these petticuts?"

"They're my clothes," muttered Ted, doggedly.

"Very well, then, I'll have Bill's," said the skipper. "But mind you, my lad, I'll make you pay for this afore I've done with you. Bill's the only honest man aboard this ship. Gim'me your hand, Bill, old man."

"I'm with them two," said Bill, gruffly, as he turned away.

The skipper, biting his lips with fury, turned from one to the other, and then with a big oath walked forward. Before he could reach the foc'sle Bill and Ted dived down before him, and by the time he had descended sat on their chests side by side confronting him. To threats and appeals alike they turned a deaf ear, and the frantic skipper was compelled at last to go on deck again, still encumbered with the hated skirts.

CHAPTER II.

"Why don't you go an' lay down," said the mate, "an' I'll send you down a nice cup o' hot tea. You'll get histericks if you go on like that."

"I'll knock your 'ead off if you talk to me," said the skipper.

"Not you," said the mate cheerfully; "you ain't big enough. Look at that pore fellow over there."

The skipper looked in the direction indicated, and, swelling with impotent rage, shook his fist fiercely at a red-faced man with gray whiskers who was wafting innumerable tender kisses from the bridge of a passing steamer.

"That's right," said the mate, approvingly; "don't give 'im no encouragement. Love at first sight ain't worth having."

The skipper, suffering severely from suppressed emotion, went below, and the crew, after waiting a little while to make sure that he was not coming up again, made their way quietly to the mate.

"If we can only take him to Battlesea in this rig, it'll be all right," said the latter. "You chaps stand by me. His slippers and sou'wester is the only clothes he' got aboard. Chuck every needle you can lay your hands on overboard, or else he'll git trying to make a suit out of a piece of old sail or something. If we can only take him to Mr. Pearson like this, it won't be so bad, after all."

While these arrangements were in hand above, the skipper and the boy were busy with others below. Various startling schemes propounded by the skipper for obtaining possession of his men's attire were rejected by the youth as unlawful, and, what was worse, impracticable. For a couple of hours they discussed ways and means, but only ended in diatribes against the mean ways of the crew, and the skipper, whose head ached still from his excesses, fell into a state of sullen despair at length, and sat silent.

"By Jove, Tommy, I've got it!" he cried, suddenly, starting up and hitting the table with his fist. "Where's your other suit?"

"That ain't no bigger than this one," said Tommy.

"You git it out," said the skipper, with a knowing toss of his head. "Ah, there we are! Now go to my stateroom and take those off."

The wondering Tommy, who thought that great grief had turned his kinsman's brain, complied, and emerged shortly afterward in a blanket, bringing his clothes under his arm.

"Now, do you know what I'm going to do?" inquired the skipper, with a big smile.

"No."

"Fetch me the scissors, then. Now, do you know what I'm going to do?"

"Cut up the two suits and make 'em into one," hazarded the horror-stricken Tommy. "Here, stop it! Leave off!"

The skipper pushed him impatiently off, and laying the clothes on the table, took up the scissors and, with a few slashing strokes, cut the garments into their compound parts.

"What am *I* to wear?" said Tommy, beginning to blubber. "You didn't think of that."

"What are you to wear, you selfish young pig?" said the skipper, sternly. "Always thinking about yourself. Go and git some needles and thread, and if there's any left over and you're a good boy, I'll see whether I can't make something for you out of the leavings."

"There ain't no needles here," whined Tommy, after a lengthened search.

"Go down the foc'sle and git the case of sail-makers' needles, then," said the skipper. "Don't let any one see what you're after, an' some thread."

"Well, why couldn't you let me go in my clothes before you cut 'em up?" moaned Tommy. "I don't like going up in this blanket. They'll laugh at me."

"You go at once!" thundered the skipper, and turning his back on him, whistled softly, and began to arrange the pieces of cloth.

"Laugh away, my lads," he said, cheerfully, as an uproarious burst of laughter greeted the appearance of Tommy on deck. "Wait a bit."

He waited himself for nearly twenty minutes, at the end of which time Tommy, treading on his blanket, came flying down the companion-ladder and rolled into the cabin.

"There ain't a needle aboard the ship," he said, solemnly, as he picked himself up and rubbed his head. "I've looked everywhere."

"What?" roared the skipper, hastily concealing the pieces of cloth. "Here, Ted! Ted!"

"Ay, ay, sir!" said Ted, as he came below.

"I want a sail-maker's needle," said the skipper, glibly. "I've got a rent in this skirt."

"I broke the last one yesterday," said Ted, with an evil grin.

"Any other needle, then," said the skipper, trying to conceal his emotion.

"I don't believe there's such a thing aboard the ship," said Ted, who had obeyed the mate's thoughtful injunction. "*Nor* thread. I was only saying so to the mate yesterday."

The skipper sank again to the lowest depths, waved him away, and then getting on a corner of the locker fell into a gloomy reverie.

"It's a pity you do things in such a hurry," said Tommy, sniffing vindictively. "You might have made sure of the needle before you spoiled my clothes. There's two of us going about ridiculous now."

The master of the *Sarah Jane* allowed this insolence to pass unheeded. It is in moments of deep distress that the mind of man, naturally reverting to solemn things, seeks to improve the occasion by a lecture. The skipper, chastened by suffering and disappointment, stuck his right hand in his pocket, after a lengthened search for it, and gently bidding the blanketed urchin in front of him to sit down, began:

"You see what comes of drink and cards," he said, mournfully. "Instead of being at the helm of my ship, racing all the other crafts down the river, I'm skulking down here like—like—"

"Like an actress," suggested Tommy.

The skipper eyed him all over. Tommy, unconscious of offense, met his gaze serenely.

"If," continued the skipper, "at any time you felt like taking too much, and you stopped with the beer-mug half way to your lips, and thought of me sitting in this disgraceful state, what would you do?"

"I dunno," replied Tommy, yawning.

"What would you do?" persisted the skipper, with great expression.

"Laugh, I s'pose," said Tommy, after a moment's thought.

The sound of a well-boxed ear ran through the cabin.

"You're an unnatural, ungrateful little toad," said the skipper, fiercely. "You don't deserve to have a good, kind uncle to look after you."

"Anybody can have him for me," sobbed the indignant Tommy, as he tenderly felt his ear. "You look a precious sight more like an aunt than an uncle."

After firing this shot he vanished in a cloud of blanket; and the skipper, hastily abandoning a hastily formed resolve of first flaying him alive and then flinging him overboard, sat down again and lit his pipe.

Once out of the river, he came on deck again, and, ignoring, by a great effort, the smiles of the crew and the jibes of the mates, took command. The only alteration he made in his dress was to substitute his sou'wester for the bonnet, and in this guise he did his work, while the aggrieved Tommy hopped it in blankets. The three days at sea passed like a horrid dream. So covet-

---

* Copyright, 1896, by Bacheller, Johnson & Bacheller.

ous was his gaze that the crew instinctively clutched their nether garments and looked to the buttoning of their coats as they passed him. He saw coats in the mainsail, and fashioned phantom trousers out of the flying jib, and, toward the end, began to babble of blue serges and mixed tweeds. Oblivious of fame, he had resolved to enter the harbor of Battlesea by night; but it was not to be. Near home the wind dropped, and the sun was well up before Battlesea came into view, a gray bank on the starboard bow.

Until within a mile of the harbor the skipper held on, and then his grasp on the wheel relaxed somewhat, and he looked round anxiously for the mate.

"Where's Bob?" he shouted.

"He's very ill, sir," said Ted, shaking his head.

"Ill?" gasped the startled skipper. "Here, take the wheel a minute."

He handed it over, and then, grasping his skirts, went hastily below. The mate was half lying, half sitting in his bunk, groaning dismally.

"What's the matter?" inquired the skipper.

"I'm dying," said the mate. "I keep being tied up all in knots inside. I can't hold myself straight."

The other cleared his throat.

"You'd better take off your clothes and lie down a bit," he said, kindly. "Let me help you off with them."

"No—don't—trouble!" panted the mate.

"It ain't no trouble," said the skipper, in a trembling voice.

"No, I'll keep 'em on," said the mate, faintly. "I've always had an idea I'd like to die in my clothes. It may be foolish, but I can't help it."

"You'll have your wish some day, never fear, you infernal rascal!" shouted the overwrought skipper. "You're shamming sickness to make me take the ship into port!"

"Why shouldn't you take her in?" asked the mate, with an air of innocent surprise. "It's your duty as cap'n. You'd better get up above now. The bar is always shifting."

The skipper, restraining himself by a mighty effort, went on deck again, and taking the wheel, addressed the crew. He spoke feelingly of the obedience men owed their superior officers, and the moral obligation they were under to lend them their trousers when they required them. He dwelt on the awful punishments awarded for mutiny and proved clearly that to allow the master of a ship to enter port in petticoats was mutiny of the worst type. He then sent them below for their clothing. They were gone such a long time that it was palpable to the meanest intellect that they did not intend to bring it. Meantime the harbor widened out before him.

There were two or three people on the quay as the *Sarah Jane* came within hailing distance. By the time she had passed the lantern at the end of it there were two or three dozen and the numbers were steadily increasing at the rate of three persons for every five yards she made. Kind-hearted, humane men, anxious that their friends should not lose so great and cheap a treat, bribed small and reluctant boys with pennies to go in search of them, and by the time the schooner reached her berth a large proportion of the population of the port was looking over each other's shoulders and shouting foolish and hilarious inquiries to the skipper. The news reached the owner, and he came hurrying down to the ship just as the skipper, regardless of the heated remonstrances of the sightseers, was preparing to go below.

Mr. Pearson was a stout man, and he came down exploding with wrath. Then he saw the apparition, and mirth overcame him. It became necessary for three stout fellows to act as buttresses, and the more indignant the skipper looked the harder their work became. Finally he was assisted, in a weak state, and laughing hysterically, to the deck of the schooner, where he followed the skipper below, and, in a voice broken with emotion, demanded an explanation.

"It's the finest sight I ever saw in my life, Bross," he said, when the other had finished. "I wouldn't have missed it for anything. I've been feeling very low this last week, and it's done me good. Don't talk nonsense about leaving the ship. I wouldn't lose you for anything after this, but if you like to try a fresh mate and crew you can please yourself. If you'll only come up to the house and let Mrs. Pearson see you—she's been ailing—I'll give you a couple of pounds. Now, get your bonnet and come."

THE END.

◆

—The latest story of a wondrous gold find in Alaska is of a lake whose bed is literally paved deep with gold dust as ponds are floored with mud. Hans Christian Pande, a name suspiciously near that of the great teller of fairy stories, an old sea captain, told the story of his find on his arrival in Seattle a few days ago. The lake is 1,000 yards long, 400 yards wide and 150 feet deep. It is fed by water from a glacier, and its only outlet is a little stream two feet deep, but of incredible swiftness. The essay showed $8 to $10 a cubic yard, and on this basis a man could alone take out $10,000 a year. Mr. Pande proposes to blast out the side of the lake, drain off the water and dredge out his gold.

AT CZARSKOE SELO.

BY SOPHIE FRIEDLAND.

It is not easy for outsiders to get a glimpse of the private life of our monarchs, especially when they inhabit the capital, but somehow during the few days I have stopped in Czarskoe Selo I have been able to learn a great deal, and I have, even quite against my expectations and principally owing to the absence of the Czar and Czarina, seen the room in which little Grand-Duchess Olga was born—a lovely apartment, and one which might be considered a worthy frame for the picture of a charming young mother and her new-born child.

It is a large, round room supported by light-blue pillars richly decorated with gilt figures, styled rococo. The ceiling shows a garden scene painted by one of our late masters, and the floor is of ancient mosaic. The prominent feature of the room is the bed. A large four-post, very high-legged, as it is four steps above the floor, the steps covered with a Gobelin carpet. The baldachin is of light-blue velvet heavily bordered with gold passementerie. The curtains and the wide "volant" which covers the legs of the bed, as well as the cover over the blue satin quilt, are of cream-colored guipure lace. Between the two bow windows, which face the bed, is a toilet table "Duchesse," a gem which had once belonged to Empress Katherine II., and before it a large fauteuil, embroidered—many years ago, I suppose—by Queen Victoria, the Czarina's grandmother. The chairs, the comfortable chaise-lounge, the tabourets and hassocks are all in blue satin and gold, style rococo, and the two tables, one quite small, the other larger, were covered with the pictures of relatives, and bric-a-brac, at which I did not dare look in detail, as I had been informed that the Empress, who had gone to see her brother and sister-in-law to the railway station, would return in an hour, and that on her return not even my shadow had a right to remain *in diesen heiligen Hallen*.

Well, I was thankful that I had seen a room in which—who knows?—a future Queen or Empress had been born. If fate had permitted me to see it but hurriedly, I made up for that by my own will in making a study of the little place where little Olga was very likely destined to spend many years of her childhood.

Amongst the suburbs of St. Petersburg, which, with the exception of Gatchina, where the Czar has spent his youth, are all more or less damp places, Czarskoe Selo is considered the most wholesome, as it is situated on elevations, and at a great distance from the swamps and marshes on which our capital, by a great mistake of Peter the Great, was built.

Until the beginning of the eighteenth century a Swedish farm called "Saary" stood in the place where now stands Czarskoe Selo. In 1708 the government changed the farm into a village, but the name remained, and owing to the similarity in the sound the place was soon called, not "Saarsky," but Czarskoe Selo, which means Imperial village.

The wide, beautiful parks and the palaces were first built under Peter the Great.

In 1711 the Czar made a present to his wife, Katherine I., of a castle in Katherinenhoff. Owing to the fashion of those days, the Empress showed her appreciation of the gift by offering to her husband, in exchange, a small wooden palace in Czarskoe Selo. This little palace was torn down by the order of Elizabeth, and after the plan made by the famous Italian architect, Count Rastrelly, the present great palace of Czarskoe Selo was built. It was so elaborately decorated with gilt statues and figures that a French diplomat once jokingly remarked, "that a gem like this ought to be covered by a glass case."

Under Katherine II. the palace was enlarged, and the decorations, which in themselves are well preserved to this day but had lost a great deal of the gold, were painted green. Tradition says that for the gold which time had spared on the statues and figures, 20,000 roubles were offered, but the Czarina had indignantly replied that she never sold her old things.

On the whole, the present Great Imperial Palace has retained the appearance it had when beautiful Katherine II. held court in it. The interior entirely corresponds with the outside in regard to the size and elegant arrangement of its apartments. One of these has walls composed of panels made of amber. The decorations of this room were given to Peter the Great in 1716 by King Frederic William of Prussia, who, in acknowledgment for this costly gift, sent the German warrior fifty-five Russian giants to complete his regiment of royal guards.

The most remarkable rooms in the palace are the enormous ball room, which receives its light from two sides; the gold room, so called from the walls and draperies of gold cloth; the Chinese room, with a number of Chinese pavilions in it, and principally the apartments of Czar Alexander I., which are preserved quite intact. Here we see his bed, his writing-table, his uniform and top-boots, his shaving utensils, and other things he had used till the last.

From the palace into the garden leads the long gallery, which is used for a winter walk. It is three hundred feet long and twenty feet wide, and is decorated by two great statues of Hercules and Flora, the work of the Russian sculptor, Gardeeff—the Hercules is a copy of the famous Hercules of Farnese in Rome. The gallery ends with a slope, on which I saw two huge bronze vases, the largest I had ever seen before.

The beautiful park adjoining the palace was began under Peter the Great, but completed and embellished by the order of Katherine, who had entrusted it to the famous English gardener, Butt. A particular section of the park is called the "Imperial Garden," and is not open to the public.

Several monuments are erected in the park in memory of Empress Katherine's victories. The tower, called the "Ruin," representing a half-demolished fortress, is a relic of our first war with Turkey in 1768. No visitor to Czarskoe Selo ever omits climbing to the top of the tower, for the view is really magnificent. The great marble monument, overlooking one of the pretty little ponds, with the eagle on top of it, is also erected in memory of our great battle won in the Turkish war, as well as the beautiful Turkish Kiosk on the opposite side of the pond. The guide regretted that he was not allowed to show me the Imperial Garden on account of the two interesting monuments, the one in the form of a bronze pillar, which bears the inscription: "The Russians did not inquire whether the enemy was numerous, they only asked where he was;" and the other of blue marble.

The so-called "Admiralty" is an elegant little pavilion, with an adjoining boat-house, in which are kept the canoes used in Katherine's time and the first trophy of the Turkish war in 1877, a flag from a Turkish man-of-war sunk in the Danube.

The two gates leading out of the park are also of historical origin; the one was erected in honor of Count Orloff, thanks to whose energy the plague which had swept away a great part of the inhabitants of Moscow was suppressed, and the other erected by Alexander I. in memory of the heroes of 1812 who were brought from the battlefield to be buried in Czarskoe Selo, with the simple inscription: "To My Dear Brothers-in-Arms."

There are many original constructions in the park, which speak of Elizabeth's and Katherine's time.

In the "Hermitage," where both Czarinas used to receive their favorites, unseen even by the servitors, is still noticed the machine by means of which the dishes were sent in and placed on the table by invisible hands.

There is Katherine's morning-room, with the busts of historical personages, the bridge made of Siberian marble in the style of the sixteenth century, a pyramid put up in memory of the Czarina's favorite dogs, with the most original epitaph in the French language, and many other relics of centuries past.

The palace in which little Grand-Duchess Olga was born is separated from the Great Palace and its park by two gates called the "Caprices." They both have the shape of a tunnel, and stand side by side, but each leads in different directions. The park adjoining the Alexander Palace was once the favorite haunt of Czar Alexander, who seems to have been very fond of the Chinese style, for I was told that it was he himself who superintended the construction of the Chinese village, the theatre, grotto, and the little pagodas which decorate this park.

In 1825 a chapel, called the Saviour's Tower, was built in the Alexander Park. In this chapel there is a magnificent image of Christ, a production of the German sculptor, Dannecker. As I looked at the wonderful features of the image, I could not help remembering the tradition attached to it, of which my old nurse had told me when I was a child. Dannecker had once seen the face of Christ in a dream, and tried to reproduce it in marble. A number of times he tried in vain, but at last in looking at the statue he had just finished he knew that it bore the image of his dream. He called a little boy into his atelier and asked him whose face it was. "The Saviour's," was the child's prompt answer. The image was finished and found its place in the little chapel of Czarskoe Selo, which stands surrounded by artificial ruins and is one of the beautiful points of the park.

On the borders of a picturesque pond, in a far-away corner hidden by century-old trees, stands the little house where once lived the Grand-Duchess Alexandra Nicolovna, the lovely sister of Czar Alexander II., who died in 1844, nineteen years old. Near the house is the marble monument of the young Grand-Duchess, with her baby in her arms.

The little town of Czarskoe Selo in itself reminds me very strongly, in spite of its antiquity, of some of the Western country towns in the United States—of course, without the advantages of electric lights and water-works. As I stroll through the wide, regular avenues, my spirits braced by the pure country air and the pleasant, dry frost of eighteen degrees Reaumur, impressed by historical recollections of centuries past, I ask myself what influence a place like Czarskoe Selo would have on forming the mind and character of the Czar's eldest child.

I have been told by people living in the palace that her coming into the world has brought sunshine and happiness in the Czar's family. The nursery is the favorite resort of the grand-dukes and grand-duchesses when they leave the gayeties of St. Petersburg to call on their Imperial relatives, who both of them dote on their little daughter. The Duke of Hesse, the brother of the Czarina, who, with his wife, has spent a couple of weeks in Russia, has remarked to his older sister, the Grand-Duchess Serge: "Who would have thought that little Alix would be such a happy Czarina?" The sad line round the young Empress's mouth is giving place to a constant smile, and let us hope will never return. I have been told the following legend—or perhaps truth—of the sad line at which people have so often wondered: When Princess Alix was quite a child, she was asked by her mother to take care of her five-year-old brother in the absence of the governess. Alix promised, but in the delight of a new toy, she did not notice that the little prince had climbed on the window-sill, and before she could call out, he had fallen from the second floor and was killed on the spot. It is said Princess Alix never forgot this sad accident, which had printed a deep line of sorrow round her youthful mouth. The birth of her own child and domestic happiness in general, as well as the love of a people with whom she is becoming more popular every day, will surely wipe out every shadow which has before darkened her young life.

◆

FLOWERS AND CHILDREN IN WINTER.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

Beauteous, tender little flowers,
  While stern winter storms the lands,
Ye were surely, warmly thus
  Sheltered by some pitying hands;
So your lovely lives are safe,
  And within the cozy rooms
Ye can till the gentle spring
  Paradise your precious blooms.
When she breathes her sweet warm songs
  Over stormless land and main,
Ye will not to man be lost,
  Be in Nature part again.

O ye little Human Flowers,
  Shivering homeless on the lands,
Will not your dear lives be saved,
  Sheltered by some pitying hands?
Surely far more precious ye
  Than the children of the bowers;
Surely ye will refuge find
  From the bleak destroying hours.
Yes, already many found
  Life from many God-blessed hands;
Can it be a single child
  Must be houseless in the lands?

◆

Borax and Its Uses.

BY MRS. LOUISE MARKSCHEFFEL.

A recent paragraph, headed "The Poisonous Effects of Borax," appearing in the columns of the *Ledger*, was unfortunate because it was ill advised, and may rob many of the pleasure and advantage derived from the use of one of the finest toilet articles in the market.

Physicians will tell the writer that borax and boracic acid are invaluable. In one family where it has been used for twenty years in every conceivable capacity, and especially for the shampoo, the hair of the five members of the family is exquisitely glossy and luxurious.

The family doctor of this family admits to using boracic acid for washing stomachs, the lavage the treatment is called, and personally the writer could not keep house without the clean, harmless white powder.

For the hair, a very little borax dissolved in hot water suffices for cleaning purposes. If you wish to bleach the hair use a table-spoonful or two to a quart of rain water, and sit in a sunny window to dry the hair. Cider and cheap champagne will also bleach.

Borax is such a delicate cleanser that it will not injure a baby, indeed many a baby's bath is ordered to contain a teaspoonful of borax by the physician, and babies thrive under it.

It is a fact that while borax cleanses the hair, it does not rob it entirely of its oils, and these are quickly restored. While ammonia renders the hair brittle, and only in three or four days is the natural oil restored.

Some careful shampooers rub a bit of Pinaud's Brilliantine into the hair after the shampoo, or a very trifle of refined vaseline. This corrects the dryness caused by the washing, which will always exist, but less after the use of a mild borax wash than any other.

"I have used borax in my hair washes for the past quarter of a century," said a hairdresser of prominence to the writer, "and my patrons would have no one else do their hair because, as they tell me, their hair keeps its lustre and their heads feel more comfortable after my shampoo than others they have tried."

Borax is much used by nurses and physicians in hospitals. A doctor in Bellevue Hospital, New York, said to the writer that boracic acid and borax were used in large quantities in their work among the sick, and that both were most gratifying disinfectants and healers. "Borated gauze," he added, "is almost superseding the carbolic gauzes and disinfectants of a day gone by." The former, borax and boracic acid, are so harmless that it may be left in unskilled hands, in fact the baby may swallow some and be unharmed. Of what other disinfectant may this be said?

◆

—John Alden's house, at Duxbury, Mass., which was built in 1650, and in which he lived during the latter part of his life, is now occupied by the ninth John Alden in direct descent from the famous magistrate of Plymouth Colony.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ISSUED WEEKLY.
52 Numbers a Year.

ROBERT BONNER'S SONS,
EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEB. 15, 1896.

REJECTED MANUSCRIPTS.—All manuscripts are sent at the risk of authors. We assume no responsibility for rejected manuscripts. If stamps are sent for return by mail, or money to prepay express charges, we will endeavor to return such manuscripts, provided we are requested within a reasonable length of time to do so.

Our Terms. Single copies, $2.00 per annum; two copies, $3.00; four copies, $6.00; eight copies, $12. Postmasters and others who get up clubs can afterward add single copies at $1.50. The party who sends us $12 for a club of eight copies (all sent at one time) will be entitled to a copy *free*. Terms invariably cash in advance.

There Are Four Ways by which money can be sent by mail at our risk—in a Post-Office Money Order, by Bank Check or Draft, or an EXPRESS Money Order, and, WHEN NONE OF THESE CAN BE PROCURED, in a Registered Letter.

Money Orders.—You can buy a Money Order at your Post-Office, payable at the New York Post-Office, and we will be responsible for its safe arrival.

Express Money Orders can be obtained at any office of the American Express Company, the United States Express Company, and the Wells, Fargo & Co.'s Express Company. We will be responsible for money sent by any of these companies. The Express Money Order is a safe and convenient way of forwarding money.

Registered Letters.—If a Money Order Post Office or an Express Office is not within your reach, your Postmaster will register the letter you wish to send us on payment of eight cents. Then, if the letter is lost or stolen, it can be traced. You can send money in this way **at our risk.**

We Cannot Be Responsible for money sent in letters in any other way than by one of the four ways mentioned above. If you send your money in any other way, you must do it at your own risk.

Renewals.—Watch the yellow label on the wrapper of your *Ledger*, as the date printed on it indicates the time your subscription expires. We will discontinue sending the *Ledger* at the expiration of your subscription. If you renew promptly you will not only insure your *Ledger* coming to you every week without delay, but it will be a great convenience and assistance to the publishers of the *Ledger* in keeping their subscription list.

Expiration of Subscription.—The date after your name on the wrapper of the *Ledger* shows to what time your subscription has been paid.

Communications.—When writing to us to renew your subscription or to discontinue your paper, you should be sure to give your name and address in full; otherwise we cannot find your name on our books.

Change of Address.—In order to change the address of a subscriber we must be sent the *former* as well as the present address.

ROBERT BONNER'S SONS, Publishers,
COR. WILLIAM AND SPRUCE STS., New York City.

THE LITERATURE OF THE DAY.

Whoever is on the lookout for interesting literature will have no trouble in finding it. There are books for all tastes, all purses and all states of mind. If one would seek recreation in the most senseless, silly and trashy novel that a weak imagination could conceive, it is there on demand. Those who look for character studies find them within easy reach; when more sober and serious consideration of important subjects is wanted, text-books of all kinds are at hand.

It would be difficult, indeed, to find a topic that is not thoroughly covered by the books of the day. There is one hopeful sign of the times, and that is that scientific works and useful books are in greater demand than ever before. Whether it be those that treat upon the vagaries and caprices of life or upon the natural phenomena or complex system of which the earth forms a part; whether we would study the heavens above, the earth beneath, or would turn to the more familiar subject of floriculture or the laws that govern the simplest forms of animal life—we have no trouble in finding books and authors from whose rich stores we can glean not only useful but exceedingly interesting information. Simplified science, art and history are also receiving attention, and text-books for children are multiplying rapidly; indeed, many of the books prepared for children are well worthy of the attention of adults. When our grandparents were children such books would have been looked upon with little favor, so rigid were the ideas of training at that period. It was not consistent with the then prevailing notions of proper discipline to make things too easy for the little ones, but they must grind and worry and study over complex and obscure problems, and woe be to the luckless dullard who failed to comprehend them.

Now children are charmed into knowledge and led by flowery paths to wisdom. There has been found a royal road to learning, and fortunate indeed are the youngsters who are encouraged to walk therein.

THE PROSPECTS OF WAR.

There is a deal of bluster and loud talk and threatening and pomposity and red tape and some bad blood in all of the war talk on both sides of the ocean that the world has been listening to for the past few weeks; but away down at the bottom of our hearts we can scarcely believe that anything is really going to come of it. There are not enough reasons why there should be war, and altogether too many why there should not be

It is not easy to see why England should be, as the phrase goes, spoiling for a fight; and the sensible and conservative people in the United States realize very clearly what a disastrous thing an international war would be.

There is a great deal of loud talk indulged in for effect in this world, and the war scare appears to be something on this order. There is ample time and plenty of sense in the country to put a stop to sensational talk and action that are certain to bring sorrow, calamity and distress to thousands of houses.

It is easy for diplomats and politicians to stay at home and send somebody else to do the fighting; but the bone and sinew, the rank and file, the stalwart and solid fathers, sons and brothers of this good land of ours are far too valuable, too dear and too necessary to be offered as a sacrifice except for a just and patriotic cause.

In the present crisis it can hardly be said that a war is unavoidable.

◆

THE ICE CROP.

Among the many products of this country, the ice crop is one of the most valuable as well as interesting and important. That there is an enormous amount of ice gathered from unsanitary localities is a fact that no intelligent person will pretend to question. That there should be a remedy for this is very evident, but just how to apply it is a problem. The ordinary dealer and the men who harvest the crop could not be made to believe that disease and death may lurk in the beautiful crystal cubes which they cut out with so much care. There is an old notion prevalent in the unlettered mind that freezing purifies water. That this is one of the grossest of errors the microscope long since informed us. There are many disease germs that even the severest cold of the Arctic regions could not rob of their deadly qualities. Ice-men, as a rule, are not over-neat; and certainly when one stands by and watches the process of cutting and gathering in, there is much that might be suggested in the way of cleanliness and careful attention.

It is thought that the time is not far distant when sanitary laws will forbid the gathering of ice from outlying ponds that drain ordinary farm-lands. Indeed, artificial ice will soon be so easily and cheaply made that the exposure and hard work of cutting this product from ponds and lakes will be done away with. The freezerman will go from place to place with his equipment, will set up his machinery at the ice-house, and in a very short time will fill it with a product that is past question as to quality. Then the consumer may take his refreshing beverages with the assurance that he is not absorbing water containing several millions of dangerous bacteria to the square inch.

◆

THE CRY OF "FIRE!"

Once in a while there is found travelling about the world and mingling in places where the sons and daughters of men do congregate some excitable, ill-balanced creature who, either from lack of sense or a desire to create a sensation, yells "Fire!" in a densely crowded building. The conduct of crowds under such circumstances is in striking contrast with that of public school children in like situations. Several times within the past few months the cry of "Fire!" has rung through some of the largest school buildings in the land. At the first tap of the teacher's bell, in one instance even before this, the children were on their feet, cool, steady, alert and with every nerve strained to "Attention!" from headquarters. In much less time than it takes to tell it, they filed out in regular order and cleared the building.

At a cry of "Fire!" where grown people were assembled, there was a panic and a struggle that would have shamed the animals at the burning of a circus. In commenting on this it has been remarked as peculiar that while children are manageable under such conditions, grown people simply become a mob.

But two ways out of this state of affairs can be suggested, one of these is the rather unattractive idea of drilling audiences as one might drill children or soldiers; the other, and probably the only rational solution, is to make public buildings and assembly rooms of all classes absolutely fireproof. It is doubtful if even this can be done, and it is still more doubtful if this would avail to save life and limb. Panicky people will become panic-stricken on very small provocation. The stampede on the Brooklyn Bridge was an object-lesson not to be forgotten during the memory of any person who witnessed that awful struggle for life. Whoever is foolish enough and criminal enough to raise an alarm of this sort in a crowded building should be punished.

◆

MY OLD-FASHIONED MOTHER.

BY MARY E. TUCKER.

Thank God for an old-fashioned mother,
The gentle, sweet-voiced one,
With the tender eyes, in whose clear depths
The love-light ever shone.

Thank God for an old-fashioned mother,
Whose silver-threaded hair
Was smooth upon her faded cheek—
Faded from age, not care.

I remember how her dear hands
Guided my tottering feet;
How she chided me when erring,
In low accents, sad and sweet.

Yes, weary years have passed since then,
But still lives memory,
And, like the perfume of wild flowers,
Thoughts of her come to me.

Other faces are forgotten;
Other voices long are lost;
But I seem to hear her soft tones
When in peace or tempest-tost.

Years have filled great depths between us
Since she went to live above;
But they have not hidden from me
All her pure, unselfish love.

◆

A NEW POWER FOR GOOD.

Much interest is felt in the aims and objects of the National Association of Manufacturers, which not long ago met for a business conference. The purposes of this convention are as follows: The fostering, extending and perfecting of home manufactures, and the establishing of new markets in foreign ports; the simplification of trade relations between the United States and foreign countries; the subsidizing of United States ships, and the withdrawal, as far as may be, of subsidies from foreign vessels; the importance of the Nicaragua Canal, and the extension and improvement of natural and artificial waterways; also the completion of connecting channels between the Great Lakes, the Mississippi Valley and the Atlantic seaboard.

This association is but a year old, but includes in its membership some of the best-known and most influential names in the United States. All of the manufacturing and commercial interests of the country are to be carefully looked after and encouraged, and reciprocity treaties are to be established with countries where business connections give promise of satisfactory results.

It is the intention of the association to organize branches in every State in the Union, on a sort of federative plan. There is an executive committee and various subcommittees, composed of men able and willing to understand and carry out whatever may seem to the united body to be to the best interests of the land. That good will come of this, no one who realizes the importance of our manufacturing and commercial relations can doubt.

◆

THE "COSMOPOLITAN MAGAZINE."

The *Cosmopolitan* for February, edited by John Brisben Walker, is rendered especially attractive by a frontispiece executed in colors, from a design by Madeleine Lemeire, the distinguished French painter in water colors. This design represents three lovely young ladies examining wedding cards, and is distinguished by a beautiful harmony of colors and charming innocence and piquancy of character.

The cover of the *Cosmopolitan* is also executed in colors, and represents the head of a beautiful girl with golden hair. In this department of art the *Cosmopolitan* is a pioneer, and cannot fail to reap the reward of its taste and enterprise. This magazine is thoroughly up to date in the discussion of themes of current interest, and its illustrations are well executed and artistic.

In the current number we notice an article on hypnotism, which contains an interesting retrospect of the history of this phase of personal influence of exceptional individuals.

It also contains some notes about Venezuela, and an article on the new horseless carriages, and electric and steam motors, all copiously illustrated.

Margaret Deland contributes an interesting novelette. "The American Artists' Association of Paris" furnishes excellent material for illustrations. In the latter article there is given a speech of Hon. Whitelaw Reid, made at the opening of the Association's rooms to the Americans resident in Paris.

In the character of its articles and its illustrations the *Cosmopolitan* is on an equality with the best magazines of the day, and in its reproductions in color shows a new and interesting development which gives it an undisputed claim to preëminence.

◆

ENGLAND'S ARMY AND NAVY.

In view of the extensive misunderstanding and reiterated inquiries as to the actual military and naval establishments of England, we have secured two articles from the Rev. SAMUEL PARKES CADMAN bearing upon the subject, giving the latest data and the results of his personal inquiries. These articles contain the facts of the case, and we commend them to our readers.

ENGLAND'S ARMY AND NAVY.

I.—The Army.

BY REV. SAMUEL PARKES CADMAN.

During my recent visit to England, I had an opportunity of seeing the British Army and Navy not often within the reach of the American tourist. I was commissioned to interview the leading bandmasters of the Guards, Infantry, Cavalry and Marines, also those of the Artillery regiments and of the Engineers. The object of the interview was an article for one of our American magazines upon the military orchestras and musical department of the Queen's troops on land and on sea.

It is needless to say that our cousins received me with every courtesy, and Lieutenant Dan. Godfrey, the senior conductor of the British army, in charge of the band of the Grenadier Guards, played "The Star-Spangled Banner" at the Indian Exhibition held in Earl's Court Park, London, as a complimentary tribute to Uncle Sam. He afterward referred in felicitous terms to his visit to Boston during the Peace Jubilee, and added: "How I should like to come and see you all once again."

The English army is not keeping pace with its navy nor its population. The long-service term of the days after Waterloo is abolished, and men enlist now for a short period with the colors (viz., on active service) and a longer one in the Army Reserve, whence they are liable to be called to active duty in the field at a moment's notice. The total number of regular forces at home and abroad, and including the Volunteers, who are equivalent to our National Guard, is 717,700 men, costing about $105,021,950 annually for their maintenance.

Of the infantry regiments, the Guards and the Highlanders are preëminent. All the infantry soldiers are armed with the magazine rifle, and the marksmanship of the Volunteers is even superior to that of the Regulars. Any one who has seen the Brigade of Foot Guards and the Black Watch Regiment of Highlanders, or the First Royal Scots, could not desire to see finer men, better disciplined or more promising for service. Germany can show none better. And the story goes that at a recent review of the Aldershot garrison, a prominent General upon the staff of the Emperor William exclaimed: "Thank God there are not many of them!" When you get below the Guards and other crack regiments the stature and *morale* of the men begins to deteriorate, and our own Seventh Regiment of New York would have an easy task in showing some of Her Majesty's Line regiments how to present a martial appearance.

The Cavalry is excellent, but, again, small in numbers. There are only thirty regiments of British cavalry, including the Life Guards and Royal Horse Guards Blue, and shame it is to a country so wealthy in horseflesh as is England that a great many of these regiments are only scantily provided with horses and remounts.

The Artillery, especially the Horse Artillery, is excellent; in fact, it is the pride of the army. Their driving, shooting and general battery equipment are first-rate, but the armaments have been behind the times. The new gun recently delivered is, as regards lightness and initial velocity, without a peer.

The Royal Engineers, upon whose intelligence so much depends for the movements of the entire force engaged, have been brought to a superb state of efficiency by their work in the never-ceasing little wars all around the frontiers of the Empire. Signalling, ballooning and technical training generally are a pastime, while the Anglo-Indian officer's experience in road and bridge building all over the Peninsula of Hindoostan makes him an expert in such matters.

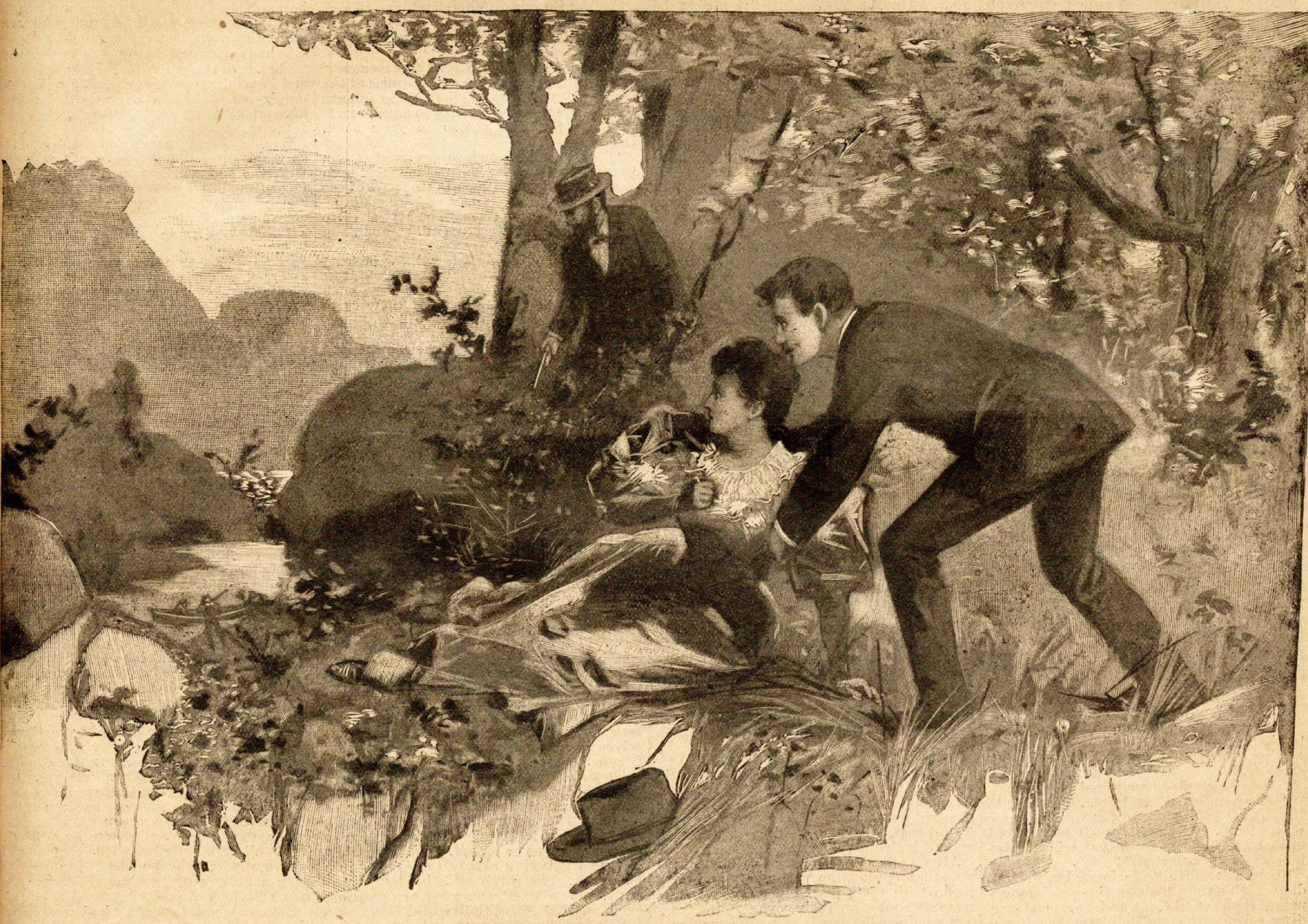
If the American reader will call to mind the acute dash and readiness of our own brave fellows during the Indian wars, past and recent, he will at once have a capital example of the results of the Empire's service upon the British soldier.

But now, as before, England's little army would need considerable reorganization at the head to enable it to do even what its paucity of numbers would permit it to do. The War Office administration is as bad as that of the French in 1870. The Commander-in-Chief, Lord Wolseley, has not had time to do anything reformative as yet. The "Umbrella Duke," Cambridge, never would do anything, but left the army in such a state of conservative helplessness that his withdrawal was hailed with a cry of relief throughout the land. Any American General would have been removed for cause long before had he as obstinately resisted the demands of safety and prudence.

The wars of to-day break out with lightning-like rapidity, and the deciding moment would have passed ere the British army could be concentrated. The "tight little island" should be quite equal, with its great railway system, to putting all its troops into one or more given spots at twenty-four hours' notice. Perhaps Wolseley intends it shall be so enabled, but apart from the pressure of a climax, he will have a hard battle to fight with the bad circumlocutory officialdom of the British forces.

In conclusion, there has been in England, from time immemorial, a deep distrust of a standing army, because of the tyranny of Charles I. and James II. This explains the smallness of her army to-day. The troops she has are excellent and well trained regimentally and in brigades, but lack experience in grand maneuvers and large bodies, because of poor management and small numbers. The British officer is not lacking in zeal, energy, ability, tact or character, and he is far better understood and appreciated by his men than the German or Austrian officer.

Lastly, if Lord Wolseley and the progressives have their way, I predict, as one of the results of the present troublesome times, a standing army of a million men for the British Empire, modelled in all particulars upon the German plan. Next week I will recall my visit to Plymouth, Sheerness and other naval centers, in a brief review of the Navy of England.



"DID THEY HURT YOU, YOUNG LADY?"

THE DARK STRANGER.[*]

BY JOHN R. MUSICK,

Author of "Mysterious Mr. Howard."

["THE DARK STRANGER" was commenced in No. 3. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the Newsdealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS INSTALLMENTS.

[In order that *new* readers of the *Ledger* may begin with the following installment of this story, and understand it just the same as though they had read it all from the beginning, we here give a synopsis of that portion of it which has already been published: The scene of the story is New York, and the time nearly fifty years ago. Robert Morton is a rich merchant and a childless widower. When his nephew, Claude Morton, his only relative and heir, left college he took him into his business house. Claude falls in love with Hallie Tyler, whose father, George Tyler, a former friend of Morton's, had failed in business seven years before and had gone to California to recuperate his health and fortune. Morton objects to Claude's engagement to the daughter of the bankrupt. News comes from California that Tyler has made a fortune, and Morton, about to start on a business trip to that State, tells Claude that if he finds this news to be true he will withdraw his objection to his engagement. Morton finds the news true, and he and Tyler start for New York. On their route they are attacked by robbers, and Tyler is robbed and killed, but Morton escapes. When he reaches New York he is very reticent about the affair, giving but the barest facts in a letter to Hallie, whom he declines to see. He will not speak to any one about the details of the crime, except to his lawyer, Mr. Howells, who also refuses to speak about it. This excites unfavorable comment, and the relations of the lovers become strained because of the suspicion aroused by Morton's conduct. A dark-featured Frenchman named Pierre Le Clerc, from Martinique, West Indies, calls on Morton, who declines to see him, but when Le Clerc sends him a note he is at once admitted. After this Le Clerc has frequent interviews with Morton, at which the latter takes care that the lawyer shall not be present. Claude suspects that Le Clerc is in possession of the facts concerning Tyler's murder, and he has high words with his uncle about his reticence regarding it. His suspicion is confirmed when he discovers that Le Clerc had an interview with Hallie and that his rival for Hallie's hand, Ambrose Fletcher, is on terms of intimacy with Le Clerc. It is ascertained that Le Clerc had a quarrel with Morton and had stated that he would return to Martinique. Claude believes his uncle to be innocent of wrongdoing and Le Clerc to be a villain. When he goes to his uncle's residence, he finds him murdered in his study. He is placed under surveillance, but is led unwittingly out of the way of the detectives by his friend, Tom Coleman. Words spoken by Claude in anger at his uncle's reticence are repeated at the inquest with telling effect by his enemy, Fletcher, and the verdict of the jury declares him to be the murderer. Under pretense of friendship, Fletcher induces Hallie to show him a letter written to her by Claude in which he threatened to do something desperate if the barrier to their marriage by his uncle's silence was not removed. (Claude had in mind going to California with Coleman in making this threat.) Fletcher, seeing the importance of this letter as evidence against Claude, refuses to give it back to Hallie when she, suspecting his purpose, demands its return. While they are contending for possession of the letter, Hallie shouting for help, a carriage stops in front of the house and two bearded men rush into the room and one of them knocks Fletcher down. Hallie recognizes Claude in his disguise and falls fainting into his his arms.

Claude and Tom Coleman make their way to a brig, *en route* for California. Tom sees Le Clerc going toward a West India vessel. . . Mr. Howells is dissatisfied with the District Attorney's conduct of the case, and he takes mysterious precautions in searching Morton's papers. . . When the brig reaches Central America, Tom is sure that an officer in search of Claude is on board a schooner which arrived a few hours later, and they hasten to depart.]

CHAPTER X.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE BONGO.

IT was an easy matter to fly from their present place of concealment; but the next question was to decide where to go. Neither Tom nor Claude knew anything about Central America, save what little they had gleaned from geography at school. They knew they could cross the country, and in some way reach the Pacific coast, and take shipping for California. But just which was the best route to the Pacific coast was a question that puzzled them amazingly.

"We've but little time to spare, Claude," said Tom. "Now this black rascal likes money, and I propose to pay him to find us a reliable pilot across the country."

"All right," Claude answered.

They found the lazy Nicaraguan lying in a hammock under a wide-spreading palm. The fellow could speak some English, and Claude a little Spanish, so they managed to converse fairly well. Tom told how it was necessary to get across the country at once, as they had important business on the other side, and asked if he could suggest a competent guide who would start with them at once.

"I know the man who will guide the senors, and will take you to him," answered the black.

About a quarter of a mile away, on the banks of the river San Juan, half a score of lusty black fellows, called *marineros* (sailors), were carousing with their patron, or captain. The black led the Americans to them and introduced them to the patron, a great, dark-skinned fellow called Pedro. He was a great boaster, but as lazy and cowardly a knave as one usually meets, even in Central America.

Pedro, the patron, was one of the patriarchs of the river. His boat, or bongo, as it was called, bore the classic name of *La Granadina*. It was built with some degree of skill, from the timber of the *cedro*, a very light and durable wood which grows in abundance about the lakes of Central America. It was an exaggerated canoe, large enough to carry from eight to ten tons and draw two or three feet of water, when loaded.

It was long, deep and narrow, and had ten oarsmen who drove the boat by means of long sweeps and setting-poles. Sails were seldom used save when upon the lake. The masts were unshipped and left at the head of the river in descending and resumed on returning. The boat had a small space near the stern, called the *chopa*, covered with a board roof, which was assigned to the passengers.

Pedro declared his willingness to start with the Americans an hour before dawn, and calling his *marineros* about him, gravely informed them they were to commence the journey at four o'clock next morning, and every one would be expected to be in his place at that hour. The *marineros* received the order in silence, and a moment later were drinking, gambling and carousing with as much zeal as ever.

"Well, that is the best that can be done," said Tom. "Now, what is to be done until that time arrives?"

"We had as well return to the house where we have been staying," Claude answered.

"I am afraid we may be followed by detectives from the schooner," said Tom.

"We leave before dawn, and they will hardly look for us till then."

"You have more at stake than I, Claude, and if you say wait, we will."

"We have to run the same risk anywhere, Tom."

"Yes, I suppose so; well, you may go back to the house, and I will go down to the town and gain all the information I can. Being forewarned is being forearmed."

Claude obeyed the instruction of his friend and remained at the house, while Tom Coleman strolled down to the town. It was dark, and he kept well in the shadows while watching the people landing from the schooner *Betty*.

Two or three torches flamed along the beach where the few landed who were coming ashore before morning. It was quite evident, however, that most of the passengers and crew had made up their minds to remain on shipboard.

Some of them were landing from a boat, and among them was one tall, dark form, familiar, though he could not be recognized at so great a distance. Tom strained his eyes in his endeavor to make out his features. At last he declared:

"May I be hanged, if I don't believe it's that infernal Martinique Frenchman!"

He hurried back as fast as he could to his friend. Claude was not yet asleep when he came into the house where he lay on the pile of hides.

"What do you think?" gasped Tom.

"I don't know."

"That infernal Martinique Frenchman came over in the schooner!"

"No, no, Tom, you are mistaken," said Claude. "It would not be possible for it to be him. You must be haunted by recollections of the man from Martinique."

"I'll bet my head it's that Le Clerc."

"But he left New York two weeks before we did."

"Right there is where you are mistaken, Claude. I tell you I saw him, if ever I saw him in my life, on the dock an hour before we sailed. My eyes cannot be deceived that way."

"Well, he can have nothing to do with us even if he is here."

"He is a mystery I can't solve," Tom said.

"As we sail at four, let us try and get a little sleep," said Claude, unconcerned.

"Sleep! Thunder! How can you sleep when for aught you know they are coming to drag you back to New York?"

Pedro had faithfully promised to have all things in readiness by the hour agreed upon. With the anticipation of an early start, the travellers made no provisions for breakfast on shore, lest they might cause delay in the morning and not get away before sunrise.

At four o'clock Tom awoke, and, with their slight luggage, rifles and revolvers, set out for that part of the river where *La Granadina* was moored. Not a sailor was to be seen, save one who kept watch over-night. He was not visible at first, and it was not until Tom had called repeatedly that he crawled out from under the *chopa* and glared at them with eyes still full of sleep.

---

[*] Copyright, 1896, by ROBERT BONNER'S SONS, All rights reserved.

"Where are the others?" Claude asked in Spanish.

"*Muy pronto*" (Very soon), was the answer, and he dodged beneath the *chopa* and composed himself for another nap.

"Confound the yellow dog! I've a great mind to pull him out and throw him in the river," Tom declared.

"That would only raise a yell on his part, and do us no good," Claude answered. "Let us sit on the bank and wait until the others come."

They sat down by the still waters, and Tom nodded drowsily. The stars had long since begun to wane, and in a few moments the sun rose. Door after door was unbarred, and people came streaming to the river to perform their morning ablutions, and all seemed puzzled to account for the presence of the travellers.

Not a sailor had appeared, and Tom was furious. He walked up and down the bank, swearing at Pedro, and vowing to wring his neck if he ever came back to the bongo.

"A pretty mess they have made of it," he declared. "We were to be off before daylight, and here we are at sunrise, objects for general inspection."

"Be patient, Tom."

"Patient, thunder! One's patience is worn threadbare waiting here forever for a lot of lazy niggers to wake up."

At eight o'clock, worn out with waiting, hungry and desperate, the travellers returned to the house at which they had been staying and ordered a breakfast. Their landlord thought if they got away by the middle of the afternoon they would do well. Nevertheless, they returned to the shore as soon as they had breakfasted, and found a part of the crew assembled, collecting wood, making fires and arranging kettles for cooking breakfast.

"Why are you not ready to start?" Tom angrily demanded of one of the natives.

The fellow either did not or pretended not to understand him.

"Say, you black scoundrel, where is your captain?"

"*No intinde, señor,*" answered the sailor.

"We are in a fix," said Tom, returning to the shade of the palm under which Claude was sitting. "Hang it, we'll be pounced upon by the officers from that schooner before we can get started."

Never was anything performed with more deliberation than the way these sailors prepared their breakfast: and the meal was disposed of with equal deliberation. It was nearly eleven when the kettles were again placed in the boat.

"When will that infernal captain of yours come?" Tom asked of one.

"*Muy pronto!*" was the answer.

"It's false! He was coming very soon before daylight, and now it is nearly noon, and there is no more sign of his appearance than before."

Tom was growing almost wild with impatience and anxiety. He paced up and down the bank of the stream and cast furtive glances toward the town below.

"Great Heaven!" he mentally ejaculated, as he paced along the river front, "will they never start! Won't that lazy nigger never come? There sits Claude, like a victim, waiting to be taken back to New York and hanged for a crime he never committed. I don't believe he would care much; he seems about as unconcerned as those lazy bongo men." Again he turned his eyes in the direction of the town, which was almost hid by a growth of mangroves and palms "They will come and take us away before we get started," he declared, nervously pacing up and down the river bank, keeping well in the shadow of the trees. "Claude, let us start up the river on foot, and let the bongo stop for us on the way."

"That would not better our case," Claude answered.

"Why not?"

"Doubtless if a detective did come on the schooner, he will be here before these rascals get started, and they would tell him where to find us. If I am to be captured, I would as soon be captured here as farther up the stream."

It was high noon when Pedro made his appearance. Fortunately for his sable skin, Tom's impatience had taken the chronic form of dogged endurance, and he sat among the boxes, packages and guns, silent and grim, but cherishing the determination to make himself even with the vagabonds before he got through with them.

"Why in thunder are you six hours late?" growled Tom to the "*Adios, Americanos,*" of the patron.

"Could not come sooner, señor. We are going soon now."

Notwithstanding this promise, it was two o'clock in the afternoon before the last straggler put in an appearance. Their luggage was carried on board the bongo, and then Claude and Tom each mounted on the shoulders of a naked *marinero*, who waded to where the boat rocked in the water and deposited them on the *pienta*, or stern of the bongo, usually occupied by the patron. The *marineros* took their places, and Pedro, with a great conch-shell in one hand, gravely stationed himself at the tiller. The sweeps were raised and every eye was fixed on the patron, who glanced at the crew, as much as to ask, "All ready?" and then, raising the shell to his lips, blew a long blast which would have put a fog-horn to shame.

"Hold! stop that, you infernal fool!" roared Tom, beside himself with rage at the demonstration made at their departure.

"Hoo-pah!" yelled the *marineros*, and the oars were plunged into the water, and the bongo started with a sudden dash forward, which pitched Tom head first under the *chopa*. Claude laughed at Tom's predicament. It was the first expression of mirth he had displayed since the tragedy. Tom, whose head was tangled up with traveling-bags and blankets, finally freed himself, and growled:

"This is stealing away in the night like thunder! We hired the rascals to take us away before daylight, so that no one would know we were gone, or where we were going. Instead of that he waits nearly all day for the infernal police to pick us up, and then announces our departure with the cussedest noise that ever tortured human ear."

"We are all right now, Tom," said Claude, cheerfully. "See how the bongo flies through the water."

The *La Granadina* was speeding over the water at a rate that seemed to make amends for the long delay. Tom got up and looked back at the fast receding town, to see if they were pursued. He was compelled to clutch to the top of the roof of the *chopa* to avoid another tumble, so swiftly did the long slender craft fly through the water. While standing thus looking over the low roof, he was facing the captain of the bongo, who held the tiller. That individual, on passing a point of land which brought the town San Juan once more in plain view, raised the shell again to his lips, when Tom, snatching his pistol, cried:

"Don't do that again, you black rascal, or I'll put a bullet through you." Though he did not fully understand the American, Pedro lowered the shell, and three quarters of an hour was taken up in explanations in bad English and worse Spanish, but a truce was made when Tom produced his brandy flask, and the bongo again flew through the water.

CHAPTER XI.

THE VOYAGE—TOM'S ADVENTURE.

The bongo was compelled to go in to shore for the voyagers to cook their meals. The food of the *marineros* consisted of long strips of jerked beef, called by the American "yard beef," rice, plantain leaves and salt, and all boiled together in a kettle.

After a supper eaten from a calabash with cocoanut spoons, the passengers and crew again took their places in the bongo, and were once more on their voyage.

It was nearly sunset when the meal was finished; the boat was pushed out in the stream, and they were once more on their way. They had now come to that part of the river where the long, broad reaches commence, and were slowly and almost noiselessly moving along in the shadow of the trees, when suddenly, as if by a simultaneous impulse, the sweeps were raised, and each sailor reverently took off his hat. The bowman commenced the evening chant, the chorus of which was taken up by the entire crew, with a precision, with respect to cadence and time, which could only result from long practice. This was called the *oracion*. There was something impressive in the apparent devotion of these rude men, apart from the melody itself, caught up as it was by the echoes, and prolonged in the forest solitudes. The impression on Claude's sad heart was indescribable. He bowed his head and his mind seemed to revert to the teachings of his mother in his childhood. In a few brief minutes he reviewed all his past life down to that last mysterious, terrible tragedy which sent him a wanderer in strange lands, far from the only being he loved.

The hour of the *oracion* being over, all hands gave a shout, and bending to the sweeps, for a few minutes, pulled like madmen, and then as suddenly stopped again and broke out into paroxysms of laughter. This strange freak, which Tom and Claude could never fully understand, was practiced every day at early evening.

Late at night they came to anchor in the middle of the stream. The sailors silently unshipped the oars and quietly prepared to pass the night with as little noise as possible, so as not to attract the mosquitoes.

Claude and Tom arranged their boxes and baggage under the *chopa*, which was the nearest approach to a cabin the vessel contained. Upon these were spread ponchos, blankets, and whatever they could find that would relieve the hard surface beneath, while gutta-percha bags were used for pillows. A stout cord was fastened close under the low roof, over which was hung a change of linen and a few necessary articles of dress. Here were slung, within easy reach, their rifles, pistols and knives, for the country in which they travelled was infested with robbers, and they were liable to be attacked at any time.

The *marineros* were armed with pistols, machetes, and a short musket called a *scopat*. It was a flint-lock gun, loaded at the muzzle, and though it carried a ramrod, it was seldom used. The cartridge was placed in the muzzle of the gun, the butt dashed upon the ground or bottom of the bongo with such force as to load and prime the weapon. An expert could load and fire very rapidly; but the *scopat* was a weapon not noted for accuracy.

Tom and Claude sat up late watching the men, who gathered in a group near the bow of the boat, each with a cigar in his mouth, a handkerchief bound round his head, and a blanket thrown over his shoulders. There they sat for hours, keeping up a conversation in a low tone, and with every appearance of earnestness.

"Claude," said Tom, after a few moments' listening to the low, inaudible tones of the *marineros*, "who knows but these fellows are a lot of brigands, plotting to murder us?"

"What put that notion in your head, Tom?"

"I have read of such things; and at San Juan I learned that some brigands had been committing depredations in this part of the country."

"Well, Tom, you seem to be between two fires. There are detectives at San Juan and brigands here."

"Yes, I thought of that, and, as the least of two evils, chose the brigands. But it might be a good idea for us to sleep with one eye open, you know, so if they try to murder us we may be able to defend ourselves."

Claude suggested that they sleep one at a time, and Tom assented. But the night passed quietly, and the *marineros* proved a harmless set of fellows, after all.

In a few days they reached the Rapides del Castillo, or Castillo Rapids, commanded by the ancient fort of San Juan, now called the Castillo Viejo (Old Castle). They had left the lowlands, and were in a wild, mountainous and picturesque part of the country. The old fortress, with its ruined walls and towers embowered in tropical forests and vegetation, looked not a little like some haunted or enchanted castle. The bongo ran in as close to shore as they dared, and the voyagers were carried ashore on the shoulders of two of the sailors, for Pedro declared that they must rest here a while and recruit their strength. Claude and Tom interposed every possible objection, but in vain. Pedro was as unvariable in his moods as the sun.

"I suppose, at the rate we are travelling, we shall spend our lives in this part of the country," Tom declared.

"Be patient, Tom. We have already learned that there is no need to worry ourselves over what can't be helped," said Claude.

They started at once for the castle by a path which the garrison, under express orders from the government, kept clear of bushes. There were huts along the path, and Tom could not resist the temptation to peep into one as he passed. A pretty yellow girl was swinging slowly to and fro in a hammock. She threw aside her long black curls, and, without changing her position, exclaimed: "*Adios*, California!"

All Americans were supposed to be coming from or going to California.

"By George, Claude, here is a pretty picture! An Indian or Spanish girl, or both. Doesn't she look delightfully lazy as she swings to and fro in the hammock! Say, girl, what is your name?"

As she did not understand much English, Claude asked her in Spanish, to which she made answer in the same tongue:

"I am Cassa, maid of Senorita Dona Teresa Fredrico, visiting at the castle."

When the answer had been translated to Tom, he remarked that if the mistress was as pretty as the maid, he would very much like to see her.

"Perhaps we shall when we reach the castle," said Claude.

As they ascended the path, they were met by one of the officers, sent by General Gomez de Cartabona, the commandant, to invite them to his quarters. He had seen the Americans approaching, and sent an officer to welcome them to Castillo Viejo and tender his hospitality during their stay.

The commandant was a man of sixty, of almost pure Castilian blood. He spoke English quite fluently, and had been to New York several times, so they could converse with him intelligently on familiar topics. Claude passed as Mr. Isaac S. K. Perkins, from Boston, and Tom told a very plausible story about their being merchants with interests to look after in California which demanded their presence.

They were assigned apartments in the castle which adjoined each other. Claude slept well that night. In his dreams he was again with Hallie, and all the dark clouds and misunderstandings had rolled away. The mystery of her father's death and his uncle's murder had all been cleared up, and he was happy. In his dreams he feared he was dreaming, and that the fair being whom he held in his arms would vanish on waking; and he awoke to find the sun streaming in at the deep-set window, and heard a soft, sweet voice in the court below singing an old Spanish ballad to the accompaniment of a guitar. The voice was one of the sweetest he had ever heard.

A moment later Tom bolted into his room, half dressed, and asked:

"Claude, did you ever hear such music?"

"Who is it, Tom?"

"A fairy, an angel dropped down from heaven among these infernal yellow-skins."

"Have you seen her?"

"Yes; my little window looks out on the court, and I saw her through it. She is a white woman, with hair and eyes black as midnight."

Tom—plain, practical Tom—whose heart had never been stirred by a tender emotion, was quite beside himself with the beautiful senorita of the castle.

"Do you know her name, Tom?" Claude asked.

"No; but she is no common person; you can depend on it."

The voice had ceased singing, the guitar became silent, and when Tom again went to his high, narrow, port-like window he could see nothing of the bright, fairy-like being who had enchanted him but a moment before.

They breakfasted with the commandant and Tom felt strongly inclined to make some inquiry about the fair singer who had thrilled his soul with her music, but refrained from doing so.

While at breakfast, an under-officer of the garrison entered and spoke a few words with the commandant in a low tone. The face of the latter grew dark; he asked some questions, gave some orders, and the under-officer saluted and departed. Claude and Tom both noticed this strange conduct, and it caused them a thrill of alarm. They at once surmised that the American Consul, aware of their presence in the country, had sent a request to the commandant to hold them, until an order could be procured for their removal to America.

The commandant, with a sorrowful expression on his face, said:

"It is too bad, my friends. My officer has just brought me intelligence that a great robber, who was once a terror to the country, and who, on account of his absence for some weeks, was supposed to be dead, has turned up, and is in the immediate vicinity."

"Who is this robber chief?" asked Claude.

"Somoza! He always gathers about him a band of desperate men like himself, who have no regard for human life."

"Your guards will surely drive him away."

"He may soon have such a band of desperadoes as to even threaten this castle."

Claude and Tom were relieved to learn that it was only a brigand that had caused the interruption at breakfast, and an hour later they had forgotten all about Somoza the great bandit chief. But Tom had not forgotten the fair singer of the morning. Her soft, dark eyes had made an impression on his heart which time could never efface. As they walked down to the river, where Pedro and the crew were, he could talk of nothing else.

"I would give every dollar I have, though that's not much, just to know who that girl is. If she isn't a princess in this country, then I don't know one when I see her."

With a smile, Claude answered:

"Why, Tom, you must be smitten at first sight with this strange beauty."

"I am going to learn something of her."

"Don't let it interfere with our journey."

"Oh, bother our journey! I am not in such a hurry now," answered Tom, whose cheek flushed strangely.

Claude, whose love affair had grown more slowly, and who supposed all affairs of the heart similar, regarded Tom's affection as ephemeral, and was inclined to slight it. It was nonsense to think of his being in love with one to whom he had never spoken a word.

Pedro had discovered some injury to the bongo, which neither Tom nor Claude could observe, and he declared it would be two days, at least, before it could be repaired. Tom did not interpose a single objection to waiting, though Claude, in whom life seemed to have been partially restored, expressed some desire to resume their journey.

About the middle of the afternoon, the two young travellers were strolling on the verdure-covered heights east of the castle when they were suddenly startled by a shriek issuing from the dense thicket just below them.

"What is that?" cried Tom.

"I don't know. Woman in distress, it seems. Let's run and see."

The report of a musket rang out from the thicket, followed by another shriek. Suddenly the yellow senorita, Cassa, was seen running up the path toward them, crying wildly in Spanish:

"Save her! Save her!"

"Stop, girl! What is the trouble?" asked Claude, seizing the arm of the frightened senorita.

Between sobs and cries, she informed him that some desperate vagabonds had seized her mistress and were carrying her away. At this moment another shriek came from the thicket from which Cassa had come. Tom waited to hear no more, but, drawing his revolver, gave chase. Like a madman he flew down the path and was soon in sight of a tributary of the San Juan, which was a fourth of a mile away, but could be seen through the palms after he had passed the thicket.

Three or four hundred paces before him, going toward the stream, were four or five rough-looking men, carrying in their midst a struggling girl. One glance at that fair face, and Tom recognized the beautiful singer of the morning.

"Stop that!" he roared, waving his pistol in the air. "You murdering villains, release her!"

One of the men dropped behind the others to cover their retreat, and, raising his *scopat*, fired at Tom. The heavy ball cut off a small palm branch within a foot of the daring young American's head. Tom did not make a second's halt, but rushed at the fellow, who, biting off a cartridge, placed it in his gun, struck the breech on the ground and was raising it, when Tom, without stopping, shot him through the body. The rascal threw up his arms and fell. His cowardly companions, seeing his fate, increased their speed, without releasing the fair prisoner.

But they could not outstrip the swift-footed American. They glanced behind them as they ran, and discovered that h was not only gaining on them, but that a companion was following him. After discharging three or four *scopats* at the Americans, they released their half fainting captive and ran to their boat, which lay in the creek. Before they had reached their boat, Tom was by the side of the half insensible senorita, and, raising her from the ground, asked:

"Did they hurt you, young lady?"

"No, senor," she answered, in excellent English.

Tom was not mistaken. He had rescued the enchanting singer of the morning, and at that moment was the happiest man living.

CHAPTER XII.

SOMOZA, THE BRIGAND.

Claude Morton was at Tom's side in an incredibly short time. He realized that there had been an attempted abduction, and knowing that the young lady belonged at the castle, knew they must lose no time in getting her within its walls.

"Tom, those fellows have stopped by their boat, and seem debating whether to attack us or not," he said.

"Let's give them a few rounds from our pistols."

"Secure the gun of the fellow you shot on the hill."

"It's hardly worth picking up. You couldn't hit the side of a barn with it," Tom declared. "We'll use Yankee revolvers."

The abductors saw them coming and fired their *scopats* at them, but the Americans kept dodging among the trees, and the outlaws found it impossible to hit them. When Claude and Tom were near enough to reach them with their revolvers, they fired six or eight shots in quick succession, causing the would-be abductors to fly farther up the stream.

"Let's take her back to the castls before they return," said Tom. They hastened back to where the late captive was still trembling from the fright the outlaws had given her.

"Young lady, were you at the castle on the hill?" Tom asked.

"Yes, senor. I was visiting the daughter of the commandant, Dona Louise."

"What is your name?"

"Dona Teresa Fredrico," she answered, in a voice that was to Tom the sweetest music he had ever heard. "My father is a merchant in Granada." She was a young lady of great intelligence as well as beauty.

Claude at this moment informed them that the brigands had been reinforced, and were about to flank them and cut them off from the castle. They were hurrying up the ascent, and had just reached the body of the man Tom had slain, when sharp firing was heard on their right, and the brigands were seen flying before a party of soldiers from the garrison.

"That saves us, Tom," said Claude.

Tom, who was willing at that moment to fight every brigand in Nicaragua, felt some disappointment. He longed for another chance to defend the daughter of the wealthy merchant of Granada.

The commandant of the post, sword in hand, led the soldiers, and they hastened down to the returning Americans with the rescued señorita. The General was profuse in his thanks to Claude and Tom for rescuing the daughter of his friend, and highly complimented their courage.

When the castle was reached, explanations were made. The señorita and her maid, attracted by some of the tropical flowers near the ancient fortress, had strolled forth to gather them, and had really gone farther than they intended. While watching a bird of brilliant plumage, one of the robbers who had been set to watch the castle, stole up behind the defenseless señorita and seized her. Cassa wheeled about and fled toward the castle shrieking for help. One of the abductor's companions fired at her, and they were trying to carry off their prize when they were stopped as we have seen.

The commandant's family rushed to embrace the rescued senorita and offer thanks to the Virgin and their patron saints for her deliverance. The commandant made heroes of Claude and Tom, and extolled their many virtues.

This being the first meeting with the ladies, it was rather embarrassing to the young Americans; but as all the ladies spoke excellent English, they were soon at their ease, and Tom did not care if Pedro prolonged the stay a month. The days fled by all too swiftly for Tom. Those days were spent in strolling about the castle or in the commandant's garden, fragrant with rare exotics, or down the path to the river in the company of Dona Teresa. At eventide, as he reclined upon the greensward, gazing up at the soft southern moon, she sang to him, accompanying her voice with the guitar.

One of those beautiful moonlight nights, about a week after they had become acquainted, Tom was sitting at her side in the beautiful arbor. She had just finished a song that thrilled with love, when he seized one trembling little hand in his own, and in his low, earnest tones told her of his love. She listened, wild with delight at such tender devotion from one so manly and brave. The red blood flushed in her cheeks at each stroke of her panting little heart. Her small, passionate lips were slightly parted, to give vent to her hurried breath. Her great dark eyes drooped to the ground until the long, dark, silken lashes almost lay on her cheek.

A gentle pressure of the hand he held was his answer. It was answer enough, and Tom was the happiest being at that moment beneath the southern moon. The señorita would not consent to plighting her troth without her father's consent, and as Granada was on their way, Tom determined to stop there and ask the old don for his daughter's hand. Claude was thinking of retiring, when Tom came to his apartment and told him all. He was in an ecstatic state of joy.

"Claude, did you ever hear your uncle mention Don Martin Fredrico, of Granada?"

"Yes," Claude answered. "He was well acquainted with him, and consigned many bills of goods to him, and received many in return."

"But you would not dare tell him who you are, would you, Claude?"

"No. Why do you ask?"

"Why, the old don is the father of this girl. She is willing to become an American citizen, you know—a Mrs. Thomas Coleman, if her father does not object; but how am I to prove that I have a good character to the old man, or that I have any character at all, unless I can do so by some one who dares own his name."

"I am sorry for you, Tom," Claude answered with a sigh.

"Now, if I could say to him 'This man is Claude Morton, the nephew of Robert Morton, Esq., of New York, whom you know to be an honorable man,' it would have some weight with the merchant, and then you could put in a good word for me. But, unfortunately, there is a warrant out for Claude Morton, and—thunder, what is to be done?"

"Trust in Providence, fate, or luck, or whatever you please to call it."

"I can't do any better."

Though Tom and the young ladies were frequently together, it was noticed that Claude seemed to avoid all society. Dona Teresa noticed this, and one day asked her lover why Claude shunned her friend, Dona Louise, who had smiled on the young American in vain.

"His is a sad story, my dear," said Tom.

"Won't you tell it to me?" she asked, raising her great, dark eyes to the face of her lover.

"Here is another fix," thought Tom. He could not refuse anything to the girl he so madly loved, and yet he dared not tell Claude's secret.

"Some time I will, dear, but not now."

"You Americans are strange people," she said. "I wonder if I will like all Americans when I come to know them."

"You will like all that are good. Those who are not you can love."

"Will the Americans like me?"

"They cannot help it."

"Your friend doesn't."

"He does, but he is now bowed down with great grief. A relative whom he dearly loved died suddenly."

"Was it a mother?"

"No."

"A father, then?"

"No, dear, it was an uncle."

Tom hated himself for having been so careless. Though he would have intrusted his life with her, he thought he had no right to trifle with Claude's life.

One morning the senorita told her lover that she intended to leave the following day, and asked:

"Won't you come soon?"

"Yes, I suppose so. Pedro must have the bongo almost repaired," Tom answered.

"My father will send for me to-morrow."

That afternoon, one of the commandant's scouts reported that a large force of insurrectionists or outlaws under Somoza were approaching the castle. Immediately the garrison beat to arms, and the cannon on the walls were loaded and every possible arrangement made for defense, Claude and Tom climbed into the watch tower, and through field-glasses which they had brought with them saw a large number of fierce men down under the hill.

General Cartabona looked the least bit uneasy, and said something about an insurrection, in which the worst elements in the country would flock to the side of the brigand. Somoza, like most great brigands, was a sort of politician, and had a large number of followers. In a country subject to insurrections like Nicaragua, he could always find some party willing to accept him, and he used them as long as it suited his purpose to do so.

While Claude was looking through his glass, there came the boom of a cannon from the parapet, and a nine-pound ball went whizzing over the heads of the outlaws.

"Your gunners aim too high," said Claude to General Cartabona.

"Boom! Boom! Boom!"

Three cannon shots in quick succession rang out from the castle walls, and the echoes went reverberating among the hills along the river. Pedro and his crew, frightened out of their wits, came running into the castle, claiming its protection.

The soldiers in the castle did not exceed forty in number, and though they were well armed, the castle was in no condition to sustain a protracted siege.

The brigands in large numbers were seen over the hill in the valley beyond. After a few moments' delay, three men with a flag of truce were seen advancing toward the castle.

"Let them come," said General Cartabona. "We will see what they want."

When they had approached to within fifty paces of the castle, they were ordered to halt, and the commandant asked what was wanted.

"We have a letter from our chief, Somoza, in which he submits a proposition," said one of the three brigands.

"Let me go and get it," said Claude. The commandant thought he had better send a soldier, but Claude prevailed on him to let him go and fetch the written proposition of Somoza. "Keep the rascals covered with your rifle, Tom," added Claude. "If they attempt to use their knives, shoot one, and my pistol will be good for the other two."

Tom assented, and, cocking his rifle, kept first one and then another covered, while Claude went and got the letter and brought it to General Cartabona. It was written in Spanish, in a clear, legible hand, and signed "Somoza." The commandant read it through, and said:

"This is an insult!"

"What does he ask—tribute to leave you unmolested?" asked Tom.

"Worse."

"What, then?"

"The two Americans at the castle and Dona Teresa, daughter of my friend at Granada," answered the commandant.

Tom grew furious, and cried:

"Let them come and get us if they want us."

The General was not long in framing a reply, which was a flat refusal. An hour later another flag of truce informed the commandant that Somoza had five hundred followers, and intended to storm the castle at once if the senorita and the Americans were not surrendered to him. Again his demand was refused, and active preparations for defense continued.

The garrison had a dozen old cannon, almost wholly useless, and a hundred muskets, but they were poorly supplied with ammunition and provisions. In addition to the garrison were Claude and Tom, worth a dozen soldiers, and then came Pedro and his ten *marineros*, who might be depended on to do something.

But, taken altogether, they could not hope to hold out long against such desperate buccaneers as Somoza led.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 7.]

◆

THE FIRST SNOW FALL.

BY NATHAN D. URNER.

We knew it would snow in the evening,
For the dull, gray clouds drooped low,
And now hill, valley and highway
Are clothed with the beautiful snow.

The hedges are heaped, and the garden
Is hidden away from sight,
And the whole wide world is muffled
In a robe of spotless white.

The passing wheels make music,
As they grind o'er the crisp, hard snow,
And through the chill air the snow-birds,
Like brown leaves, fluttering go.

I hear the bleats from the sheepfold,
And now from the woodland bare
The woodcutter's ax sounds, muffled
And dull, through the frosty air.

The gate-posts are mitred like bishops,
The old pump is white-ruffed to the chin,
The hemlocks are broidered with ermine
Which a queen would be proud to win.

The hills are hushed in a garment
That was wrought in a single night,
And the valleys between are folded
In a silence deep and white.

But a sadness lies on my spirit,
And my heart beats faintly and low,
For I think of a grave in the church-yard,
Deep folded beneath the snow—

The grave of one loved fondly,
Of a sweet and saintly form,
The beaming light of whose vanished smile
Could make this cold world warm.

◆

A POSSIBLE STATE.

Among the bits of current gossip that are floating around the East, the statement that efforts are to be made to have Long Island admitted to the Union as an independent State is one of the most interesting.

On the score of population there is no question as to its eligibility. There is a tendency, quite evident in various localities, to have extremely large States divided into smaller ones. As they increase in population they will have ample claims for such recognition, and, when all facts are taken into consideration, there is no reason why they should not be admitted as independent States of the Union. Brooklyn alone, with its outskirts, has twice the population of some of the States.

Independent Statehood gives powers and privileges that the inhabitants of a special locality find very desirable. Each region best knows its own wants, and in many places the local government is the only one that seems to meet the needs of the people.

◆

NOTICE TO OLD SUBSCRIBERS.

Watch the yellow label on the wrapper of your *Ledger*, as the date printed on it indicates the time your subscription expires. We will discontinue sending the *Ledger* at the expiration of your subscription. If you renew promptly you will not only insure your *Ledger* coming to you every week without delay, but it will be a great convenience and assistance to the publishers of the *Ledger* in keeping their subscription list.

THE BROWNING PALACE AT VENICE.

On the Grand Canal at Venice there is a singularly interesting group of buildings. First, at the corner of the small canal which every tourist traverses on his way to and from the station is the great red pile known as the Palazzo Foscari. It is now used as a sort of business college, and young Venetians learn bookkeeping in the banquet halls of the old doge. Next to it are two gray and ancient buildings, leaning against each other and the Foscari for support. They form one of the Gustiniani palaces, and harbor a mosaic factory. Beyond is a solid and rather gloomy-looking building standing somewhat aloof from the neighbors, and with a broad, semi-circular flight of steps leading from the pillared entrance down into the water of the Grand Canal. The posts outside for the convenience of the gondolas are painted a dull brown, in contrast with the blue and white posts of the other palaces. High iron gates close the entrance.

The first trip you make on the watery highway of Venice your curiosity will be satisfied in regard to this palace, if on no other point, for every gondolier knows the Browning palace. Get him to poke the nose of his gondola between those brown posts, and, if the custodian is not in sight, ring the bell beside the iron gates. A rather crabbed looking man will let you in, and, with a gruffness, which is only as it were skin deep, tell you to go through the court and up the broad staircase at the rear. In the court you will find a bronze statue of a beautiful woman, about whose nude body a serpent has coiled its folds; she holds its head to her bosom, and looks at it with a strange fondness. If you like speculation you will begin to wonder what manner of man it is who modeled this figure, and you will climb the staircase with more than ever of anticipation, for the sculptor is Robert Barrett Browning, the sole heir to the names of two great poets and the master of the house you have come to see.

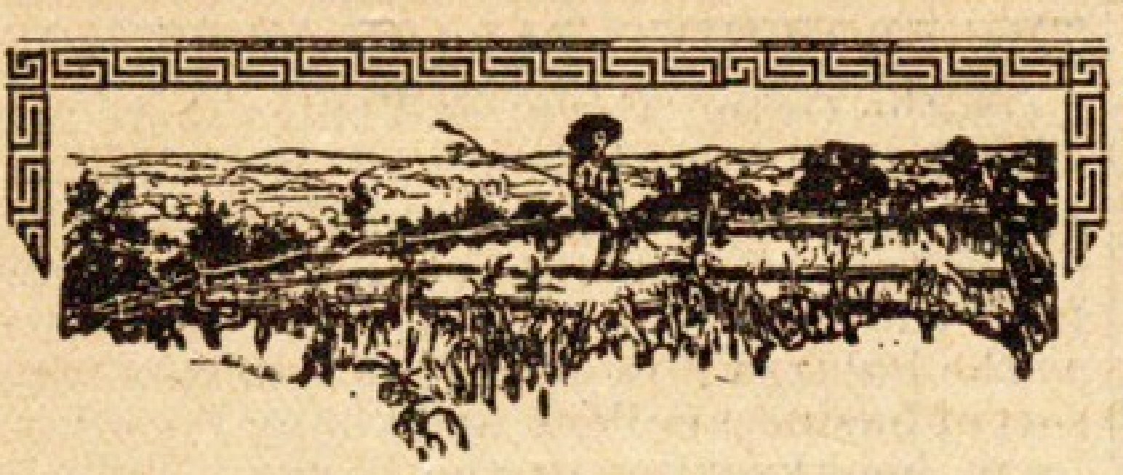
At the top of the broad stairs the custodian will be waiting for you at the doors leading into a great hall, with a high, frescoed ceiling by Tiepolo and a polished wood floor. If you are as young as it is to be hoped you are, you will take an experimental whirl across this shining expanse while the custodian's back is turned. Result, an envious sigh when he announces that this is the *salle du bal.* You sigh again even more wistfully when he tells you that a few years ago Emma Eames spent a month as a guest in this palace, and that every evening she sang to her host and his friends as they sat in the great easy-chairs you see on that island of rugs at the other end of the hall.

The custodian will lead you through one apartment after another, filled with beautiful old wood carving, old frescoes, inlaid cabinets and pictures and statues by the owner of it all. More interesting than the works of art, however, are the reminders of the two poets whose personalities are so dear to thousands of people. Here is a bust of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, modeled by her son, and her portrait by the same careful hand. And there is an earlier portrait of her, more beautiful than those one generally sees, and a bust of her as a young girl, with the curls in the same way she wore them all her life. In one corner is the small writing-desk she used, and near it is the bust of her husband. In a small alcove is a reproduction of a memorial tablet in Florence.

One is surprised to find how livable this big palace has been made. In the first place, the owner, in addition to the kindness of permitting people to visit the house, has added the courtesy of regarding them as probably honest. Most "show" houses are scrupulously swept and garnished of everything which makes them homelike and real. They contain a barren array of chairs, tables, and so on, but that is all. Mr. Browning has been kinder to the visitors, whom he evidently regards as, in a way, his guests. There are books on the table, there is music on the rack in the music room, and there are interesting photographs of his father and mother. He makes you feel as if he understood why you came and was glad. You look at his own photograph with a kindly interest and are not sorry, after all, that he has a palace and that Emma Eames came and sang to him.

He is, as shown by this photograph, a man of thirty or thirty-five, with dark hair, which, in your present kindly mood, you regret to see so thin on top. He has a dark mustache, and seems a well-built fellow, quite as capable of riding across country as of painting the pictures and modeling the statues with which the adjoining hall is filled.

The dining-room, looking out on the canal, has a fine, big fireplace, lined with polished brass. You long to see how the light would dance in it. The butler's pantry adjoining is as large as the dining-room itself, and the walls are covered with row after row of polished china and glass. The library is being made over to suit this fastidious young man, and will be most attractive with the old carved pillars and woodwook he has picked up, he knows where. The floor above is occupied by bedrooms, while the ground floor is the home of the custodian, the "boat-house," and general store-room. Mr. Browning occupies the palace alone except for his father's sister, who lives with him. Part of the time only is spent at Venice, the artist having a partiality for his country house, a fine place about two hours distant by rail.—*Sun.*



CHILDREN ALL OVER THE WORLD.

The Falling Out of Faithful Friends.

Effie Black and Nannie Wells, girls of eleven and twelve, dear friends, who were called "the chums" in school, were walking home, arm in arm, talking over a prize that the teacher, Miss Hunter, had offered for the best composition—which was to be a little story, founded on some incident in the writer's own life.

"We haven't had much happen to us," said Nannie. "I wonder who will get the prize."

"I will," said Effie, in a tone of certainty. "I shall write such an interesting story that Miss Hunter will have to give the silver medal to me."

"Why, what will you write about?" asked Nannie.

"I shan't tell anybody," said Effie. "But I will win the prize."

This sounded very conceited to Nannie, and she grew angry, and said:

"Why, what an idea you have of yourself!"

"Altogether of my story," said Effie, laughing.

They had now come to the spot where they always parted, and Nannie was still so vexed that she ran off without kissing Effie, saying to herself as she walked on:

"I will try my best to get that medal, if it is only to put her vanity down." And immediately after tea she took her writing-pad and pencil and seated herself at the table in the dining-room, meaning to write a fine story.

But no ideas would come. Though true ambition may lead to success, I assure my young friends that mere rivalry that arises from envy never did yet. Nannie worried herself almost into a fever. Finally she did a very mean thing. She begged her brother Jack, to write her a composition—something that might have happened to a little girl.

"Because I *can't* write anything," she said, bursting into tears, "and *I* don't want Effie Black to get the prize; she brags so."

Of course, Jack ought not to have written the composition, but he did. He wrote "A Girls' Baseball Game," and Nannie copied it, thinking it very fine, and feeling sure of success.

If she had written something that she thought good herself, she might now have felt kinder to her old friend; but as the success she thought she was sure of was to be won by deception, she had an uneasy conscience, and love did not return to her heart. She continued to quarrel with Effie whenever they walked to school together, and at last used to run over the fields and walk with Jane Shaw. Effie went alone. She had no idea what Nannie was angry about, but it hurt her.

By the time the compositions were read the girls were almost strangers. And there began to be a general idea that Effie was assuming.

On the day of the prize-giving, the little competitors did not look as pleasantly as before.

They were worried, envious and anxious; and as for Nannie, she had but one wish—that Effie Black should not get the prize—even if she did not get it with Jack's composition.

I have not space to give all the compositions that Miss Hunter read. When she came to Nannie's, she looked at it, refolded it and put it aside, while Nannie turned scarlet. She knew it by the blue silk she had stitched it with. The next that came was Rosy Bell's about going to the circus. Then the teacher took up a very neatly-written paper, and began thus:

"'I have not travelled much, or seen many wonderful things, but as I must tell only what has happened to myself, I will write the most interesting thing I remember. It occurred when I was a girl of seven, not a very good little girl, for I had taken my doll-wagon down to the railroad track, where my mother had told me not to go, and was playing with it there, when our new neighbor in the next house, a little girl I did not yet know, who was sitting under a tree dressing her doll, cried out: 'Come off the track! Quick! Don't you hear the train!'

"'I had not yet, but now I did, and I turned to run, but alas, my foot caught in what is called a frog, and I could not move it. The train was round the corner in a tunnel, and I could not see it, but the ground shook under me and the noise was awful. In two minutes I should have been killed, or had my feet cut off; but the little, new neighbor saw my trouble. Starting to her feet she ran to help me. She was only one year older than I, but she had ten years more sense, and she brought her scissors with her. Well it was she did so, for my shoe-strings were in a knot and would not untie. But clip! clip! clip! she went with her sharp little blades. The strings parted. She pulled my foot out, clasped me in her arms, and rolled me over to the bank just as the express train went flashing past like lightning. It was a deed as fine as any in history, for what can a person do more than risk his or her life for another? For my part, I shall be grateful all my life.

"'The world ought to know that the name of this little heroine of eight years was Nannie Wells; and she is still my dearest friend, and always will be. EFFIE BLACK."

"Oh! oh! oh!" cried the children.

Then a boy in the audience cried: "Hurrah for Nannie Wells!"

And all began to clap their hands, while Nannie hid her face in her arms, and all the love she ever had for Effie—love which began when she saved her life—rushed back upon her heart.

Effie's composition won the prize, but her story had made Nannie the heroine of the day. Every one wanted to kiss her, and Miss Hunter did not reprimand her for having been helped in her composition, as she intended; but Nannie felt very humble.

"I only did what any one would do if they could," she said. "It is Effie who is noble, to tell the story in such a way that it made me out a heroine when I had been so hateful and so mean to her."

It was with joy that Nannie saw the silver medal pinned on Effie's bosom, and her kiss of congratulation came from the heart. The two girls walked home together hand in hand as in the old days, fonder of each other than ever before; for as the poet, Tennyson, has said:

"The falling out of faithful friends
Renewal is of love."

Correspondence

Government Schools.—Constant Reader asks the course, requirements, etc., of the Government schools at West Point and Annapolis. *Answer:* Applicants must be between seventeen and twenty-two years of age for West Point, and between fifteen and twenty for Annapolis. For West Point, the course of instruction requires four years. It is very thorough and principally mathematical and professional. The leading subjects taught are: Mathematics, French, drawing, arms, tactics, natural and experimental philosophy, chemistry, mineralogy, geology, electricity, history, international, constitutional and military law, Spanish, civil and military engineering and the science of war. There must be previous training, applicants being required to pass a rigid examination in reading, writing, orthography, arithmetic, grammar, geography and history of the United States. The physical examination is also very rigid and the course of training extremely exacting. The discipline is strict and punishments are inflexible rather than severe. Only about one-half of the applicants continue through the entire course or graduate. Appointments are usually made one year in advance and upon nomination by the Representative of the district in which the applicant resides. Only one leave of absence is allowed during the four years, and that at the end of the second year. The pay of a cadet is five hundred and forty dollars per year, which, with reasonable economy, is enough for his comfortable maintenance. The requirements at Annapolis are not quite so strict, but are enough so for all practical purposes. While the training is severe, it is not unreasonably so, and almost all graduates feel themselves fully compensated for all of their study and hard work.

Soldiers' Homes.—R. H. H. asks about Soldiers' Homes and the proper course to take to be admitted to one of them. *Answer:* A soldier desiring admission to the Home must make application in writing, when a blank will be sent to him which he must fill out. In some Homes the discharge papers must be sent, or no attention will be paid to the letter. If the paper is lost, a copy of it, duly certified by the War Department or the Adjutant General, must accompany the application. These Homes are established for aged or invalid soldiers and sailors who have been honorably discharged, and here they can enjoy all the comforts of a home. Only those who are unable to earn a living are admitted, and these are taken in, not in charity, but because they have earned honorable and comfortable subsistence by their bravery and patriotism. They have a right to a home and are made welcome. They are, however, subject to the Rules and Articles of War and are governed thereby as if they were in the Army of the United States. Subsistence, quarters, clothing, religious instruction, employment, if possible, and amusements are provided by the Government. Applicants must agree to be guided by the rules and to follow the regulations of the place. They may live quietly, comfortably and respectably as wards of the nation.

Points of Etiquette.—Henrietta asks the following questions: 1. What is the proper course to pursue if one receives cards for an "At Home" and cannot attend? 2. In case one goes, is it proper to leave a visiting-card? 3. If only one member of the family goes, should the cards of the others be left? 4. If only the ladies go, should the cards of the gentlemen be left? 5. When one receives cards for a wedding reception and cannot attend, what should be done? *Answer:* 1. An invitation is a courtesy that demands an acknowledgment. Send regrets. 2. Authorities differ. It is well to leave one's card in the hall plate. The hostess has them gathered and can then tell who has and who has not returned her courtesies. 3. Leave cards for the invited members of the family. 4. Yes, for the gentlemen as well. 5. When one receives cards to a wedding reception, the correct thing is to send regrets if one cannot go.

Non-Refillable Bottle.—J. D. J., A. P. S. and E. L. H. write to the *Ledger* about a bottle which when once emptied cannot be again refilled without being detected. They desire information as to who wants the bottle. *Answer:* The *Scientific American* of November 30, 1895, and January 18, 1896, contain articles on this subject. There seems to be a good deal of interest about it, and several persons claim to have discovered a way to make a bottle that cannot be refilled without detection. But in view of the fact that there are some hundreds of patents in this line, the outlook for inventors is not at all encouraging.

Cannot Sound the Letter H.—L. L. is unable to sound the letter H in such words as "wheel," "what," etc., and asks how to overcome the difficulty? *Answer:* There is probably no other way than by constant and careful practice. Asks some one who speaks distinctly to utter the words, then imitate them as nearly as possible. In a short time you will notice an improvement, and may soon overcome the trouble altogether.

Style of Hair-Dressing.—Brunette asks: How should a sixteen-year-old girl wear her hair? It is quite long, falling nearly to her waist. *Answer:* One of the prettiest and simplest ways is to braid it and tie it near the end with a ribbon. If a more formal style is preferred, coil it low at the back of the head; but this is neither as appropriate nor as comfortable.

Queen Victoria's Daughters.—St. Louis Reader asks how many daughters Queen Victoria has, also their names and ages? *Answer:* Victoria Adelaide, born, 1840—living; Alice Maud Mary, born, 1843—died, 1878; Helena, born, 1846—living; Louise, born, 1848—living; Beatrice, born, 1857—living.

Snake Skin.—L. R. desires the name of some manufacturer of snake-skin articles. *Answer:* Albert Wetzler's Sons, No. 7 Ferry Street, New York.

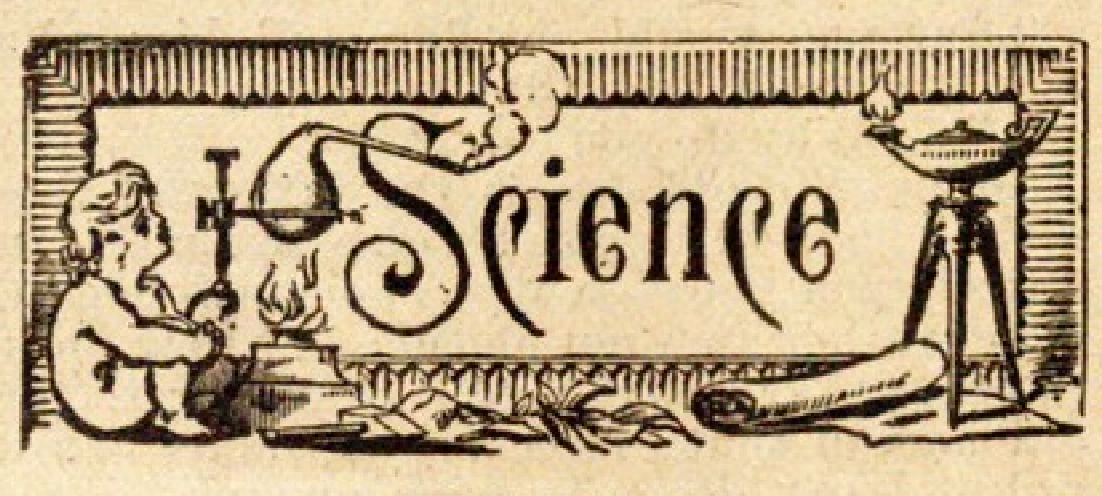
Order of the Cincinnati.—Mrs. A. H. H. asks for the name and address of the Maryland Society, Order of the Cincinnati? *Answer:* Hon. Robert Milligan McLane is the President of the State Society of the Order of the Cincinnati of Maryland. Baltimore, Maryland, is his address.

The Meaning of a Word.—E. D. H. G. asks the meaning of the name "Carcassonne" used in one of the *Ledger* stories? *Answer:* It is the name of an old city in the South of France. Nadaud, a French poet, wrote a poem entitled "I have never seen Carcassonne."

British General.—Mamie B. asks how the name "Howe" is pronounced. *Answer:* "How," as though spelled without the "e."

Day of Week.—Gladys asks: What day of the week was October 6, 1852? *Answer:* Wednesday.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*



Science

How to Go Up and Down Stairs. Very many diseases are brought on and others are aggravated by going up and down stairs in an incorrect fashion. Few people go up stairs in a sensible and rational way. It is the custom to rest the weight on the ball of the foot, and give a little spring to the next step. This is not only hard work, but is an unnecessary strain on the muscles, and very exhausting to delicate people. Going up in this way is bad enough, but going down in the customary manner is a thousand times worse. To bounce from one step to another, striking the weight on one or both feet, is almost certain to produce serious disease. If there is any weakness of the organs of the body, there is liable to be a breaking away of ligaments, or rupturing of the tissues. Severe pain and long-continued illness have in more than one instance been traced directly to the pernicious habit of bouncing down stairs. At the moment the person does not realize it—indeed, may continue in the practice for a long time, suffering meanwhile, but either unable or unwilling to attribute the distress to the correct source.

The After-Effects of Grippe. No one has, up to date, been able satisfactorily to diagnose the after-effects of this remarkable epidemic. An eminent authority, in commenting on its peculiarities, says that fresh air is the best tonic and restorer. Among the most serious symptoms of apparent convalescence is the extreme depression to which the patient is liable. In this state a suicidal tendency is often developed, and hysteria is not uncommon. This is specially noted in cases where there has been a great deal of pain in the head. Pleasant and absorbing occupation is one of the best helps to recovery. Nourishing food, not too concentrated, a reasonable amount of exercise, stopping far short of the point of weariness, are also advantageous. Above all, indulgence in depression should be avoided, as this may develop into a chronic melancholia, and end in a mental disease of a serious character. As a summary of treatment, take plenty of fresh air, simple tonics, nourishing food and laugh and enjoy everything that comes in the way.

Uses for Old Corks. Whoever throws away a cork flings out a substance which is of great value. Old corks should never be destroyed. They have many uses and are worked up in many ingenious ways. They are among the principal items in the manufacture of insulating covers for steam pipes and boilers. Ice-houses and ice-boxes are packed with them. Fine cork shavings are now used in the filling of pneumatic tires. Ground into powder, they are used in padding horse-collars. Linoleum is made principally of cork, and bath-room mats of this substance are useful and popular. Home-made or inexpensive life-preservers are filled with old corks cut into scraps. When corks are so bad-looking that they are not fit for household purposes, they are still of value and should be put carefully away for future use.

Coffins of Aluminum. Aluminum coffins are among the latest inventions. They are made square, like the ordinary box coffin, and have vertical sides and ends. They have corner braces, moldings at the top and bottom and molded covers. Instead of being covered, as is usually the case with metal caskets, the surface is left bare and burnished. The lining, handles and general finish are made after the usual models. An interesting item is the relative weight of coffins. A six-foot oak casket weighs about 190 pounds; a cloth-covered one, with metal lining, about 175; ordinary metallic burial cases from 450 to 500, while the new aluminum casket weighs a hundred pounds or a trifle less.

Improvements in the Phonograph. There is a very marked change in the condition of this interesting invention since the days when phonographs were sent out through the country for the sake of collecting pay for the privilege of looking at them and vainly trying to operate them. It is scarcely creditable to the management that they exacted pay for the use of machines that even in the hands of the agents never did an hour of satisfactory work; but at that time, and perhaps equally so now, the phonograph was intended as a money-making scheme, and the victims got what they might out of a transaction that was as near a humbug as any interesting toy could be.

A New Submarine Boat. A new submarine boat is about the shape of a whale twenty-six feet long and between five and six feet in diameter through the middle. It consists of three sections of high-grade metal securely bolted together. The boat is propelled by a screw, and has a speed of about seven or eight knots an hour. The motive power is an electric battery.

WOMAN'S WORLD.

All questions which may be asked on the subjects treated in this Department will be answered in the Correspondence column.

Fashion and Fancy. While dressy neckwear made of lace and other diaphanous materials is worn now quite extensively, one fails to find much of it in the newest Paris models. The tendency is to more formal fabrics, and yokes, revers, turned-over collars and epaulets of velvet, satin, or heavy embroidery or passementerie.

A favorite style shows a waist with a bolero effect in some rich goods over a plainer fabric. For example, a dress of peau de soie has a bolero of figured velvet, with a collar of velvet and satin to match. The little jacket opens over a vest of embroidery, and a narrow ruching is placed above the collar, close around the throat. This ruching is one of the features of coming styles. It means that the universally unbecoming and untidy fashion of wearing dress-waists without something white in the neck is going out, as it should have done long ago; indeed, it is a fashion that should never have been given countenance. There is nothing more becoming and befitting a gentlewoman than a soft ruching of fine lace around the throat. The linen collar and cuffs are also to be in universal use with tailor costumes and other dresses of a suitable sort.

Present indications point to waists with short, very full basques as the regulation model for spring. These basques vary in length from two and a half to four or five inches, some of them being even longer than this. One model has a double-breasted front, with points at least ten inches below the waist-line. The sides of this basque, however, are quite short over the hips, and form a very full, very narrow ruffle across the back breadths.

Another favorite style has a plain-fitted back that extends snugly down to the gathers of the skirt. The fronts are cut entirely away from the sides of the collar to the waist-line, leaving a straight opening the full length of the bodice. The skirt of this dress is finished with a perfectly fitted corselet, about four inches wide at the sides and slightly pointed above and below at the bodice. The waist has inside hooks that attach to this corselet to keep it in place. A waist of this sort is a work of art, and should under no circumstances be undertaken except by an expert. Only the highest grade of tailor-made skill is equal to a task of this kind.

A few combination costumes are shown among the best importations. A skirt of wood-colored cloth is made plainly, save a band of plaid in dark blue, gold and green, which is set around at the hem. The waist and sleeves are of the plaid. A wide cloth collar with shoulder sections extending well out over the sleeves and forming a cape at the back, has a wide front piece reaching to the belt. Over the skirt fall long tabs, shaped somewhat like the leaf of an elm-tree. These tabs are of the plaid and are edged with the cloth like the skirt, the edgings, cape collar and front of plain goods being embroidered in silk in scallops and vine pattern; the high standing collar is also embroidered, and is enriched with little jewels set in among the flowers and foliage. The sleeves are enormous puffs from shoulders to elbows, with fitted cuffs and turned-back cuffs of the plain fabric.

A striking costume is made of heliotrope brocade and golden-brown satin. The skirt is plain, the waist has the outside material fulled in slightly at the bodice point, the bodice is edged all around by a band of rich embroidery, two lines of this embroidery extending down the skirt on either side of the front, also from the sides of the bodice to the shoulders, then in a deep curve around the upper part of the corsage. In and out among these bands are braided satin ribbons. A small yoke is of satin, and the high collar of the brocade has loops of satin at either side. The sleeves are made after a somewhat novel design. The material is folded in three box-plaits, one at the front, one at the outside and one at the back. Under these plaits ribbons are sewed in so as to cross the material. It is put on in a lattice fashion and bows are set on at intervals. This model furnishes a number of excellent hints for spring dressmaking.

Fashion Notes. A novelty in the way of a theatre bodice is made of striped silk and cloth of the most exquisite texture. The waist proper is made of the silk, as are also the very full-topped sleeves. The collar is of the cloth elaborately embroidered; the fronts do not meet except at the collar and waist line, a space of about three inches over the bust being filled in with a jabot of lace edging. From this open front there are turned back sections that follow the outline of the arm-hole, then narrow to a point at the belt. At the upper side they curve from the front of the collar almost to the tops of the shoulders. These sections are a mass of rich tracery in silks, chenille and jewels. Below the waist line there are basque-shaped sections of the same embroidered fabric and wide cuffs to match.

A fancy waist for a young and slender woman is of velvet. The body is close-fitting, and has points that do not meet across the front, but are held in place by straps of velvet fastened underneath. A full, short basque skirt is trimmed with rows of metal cord in iridescent colors; a wide collar turns back over the shoulders, curves down over the sleeve tops, then forms a scallop that cuts in almost to the vest, then runs to a narrow point just below the bust. The vest is made of lace shirred over an appropriate color, and crossed with bands of embroidery. A ruching of thick satin stands out from the throat and slightly droops over the lace collar; the leg-o'-mutton sleeves have cuffs edged with the metal cord.

A jaunty and pretty hat is somewhat in sailor shape. The trimming is a pair of wide-spreading wings, in the middle of which is a rosette of velvet or satin. Back of the wings are fluffy loops of thin material and velvet ribbon. A pompon of feathers with aigrets completes the trimming.

WOMAN'S WORLD.

(Continued.)

A great deal of attention is being bestowed upon mourning costumes. As previously mentioned in the *Ledger*, crape is being used in the most lavish fashion. A new model shows a skirt of heavy and fine Eudora. This skirt is covered from the waist line three-quarters of its length with crape laid on smooth and made up with the goods. At the lower edge of this crape finish there are five folds of crape. The waist is entirely crape-covered, as are also the sleeves. The shoulder caps are of crape, with folds of the wool goods below. Straps of the cloth outline a yoke, and extend from collar to waist-line down the front and side.

Spring hats are as usual shown in endless variety. There are always scores of patterns that nobody wants, and that no one would wear under any circumstances, but they go to make up the variety and fill otherwise unoccupied space. A stylish and practical pattern has a rather low, square crown, and a brim slightly curved in and suggesting an inverted soup-plate. This brim is rolled up at the back and a trimming of loose, soft bows and velvet flowers is preferred.

A hat of soft felt has an embroidered brim slightly rolled back from the face. The trimming is of ostrich tips and upright bows of satin or velvet ribbon.

For information, thanks are due to Messrs. James McCreery & Co., B. Altman & Co. and Arnold, Constable & Co

Gymnasiums for Girls.

How much less essential to perfect manhood and womanhood is physical training than education? How much more important is it that scientific rules and principles of health should be observed in the rearing of boys than in the up-bringing of girls? These are questions practically intelligent people have come to consider with a seriousness that is making to appear foolish many of the theories and superstitions that have hindered the progress of the race, and given the aspect of crimes to certain sins of omission that stupid custom had sanctioned. There is profound wisdom in the reflections of a discerning writer who says: "As intelligence advances mankind will perceive as a truth of universal application that which is now but a struggling conception on the part of a few who belong to the noble army of fanatics and heretics, viz., that physical inadequacy is at the root of far more of the vices and sins of to-day than moral delinquency and a systematic intention of doing wrong." The proposition is almost self-evident. Physical infirmities and deficiencies resulting from a disregard of the commonest rules of muscular development and bodily perfection must have their reflex in the spiritual and moral character of the victim. Strong, active, physical health is rarely associated with moral perversity in the rightly-educated man or woman. In a vague way this fact is recognized by parents in its masculine bearing, but an hereditary prejudice against whatever may tend to make girls less delicate, less dainty than is consistent with the notion of feminine refinement condemns woman to a position that is in most ways disadvantageous to her highest and best interests.

The terrifying thought that physical training will make hoydens of their ethereal daughters causes most mothers to look frowningly upon the gymnasium. They care to cultivate only those parlor graces that a narrow society has chosen to regard as the evidence of gentility, indifferent to the fact that they represent, generally, an inferior state of womanhood. Everything in the discipline of a girl is repressive, bodily and mental, for it is not to be supposed that a strong, broad, full mind can find place in a cramped, compressed, stunted physical frame.

It is true, the notion of a gymnasium for girls is yet hardly formed into a rational idea, a petty sort of calisthenics that does well for exhibition purposes being its extent. But the proper discipline under competent direction, the limbs unobstructed, and the body allowed free play, is the problem of the future. The dressing is a matter of as great importance as the system of muscular development. Dress reform is possibly keeping pace with the increasing interest in physical culture, and it is gratifying to know there are several schools in this country where girls in sensible costumes are daily exercised in the gymnasium as a part of their general education. These schools are not only successful in themselves, but they have set examples that are being gradually adopted in all institutions for the education of girls and young women. The results are such that it will be astonishing if the ridiculous prejudice against physical training for girls shall not have entirely disappeared within the next twenty years, in this country at least.

Delicious Sandwiches.

Boil one pint of chestnuts, and cook two good-sized chicken livers. Make a paste of these, and season with salt, lemon juice and pepper. Spread between thin slices of white bread. Remove the brown covering of the nuts by pouring boiling water over them after they are boiled.

A Simple Cake.

Cream one-half cup of butter slowly. Add one cup of sugar, one-half cup of milk, the beaten yolks of two eggs and the beaten whites. Sift in one heaping cup of flour, one teaspoonful of baking powder, and one tablespoonful of cinnamon.

Nut Macaroons.

Take the whites of two eggs, beaten very light, then sift in one cup of granulated sugar, a little at a time. When the sugar is all in add a cup of chopped raisins and one cup of nuts. Butter brown paper and bake in a moderate oven.

Bouillon.

Six pounds of beef and bone. Cut the meat and break the bones. Add two quarts of cold water. Simmer slowly five hours. Strain through a fine sieve, removing every bit of fat. Season with pepper and salt.

Patterns.

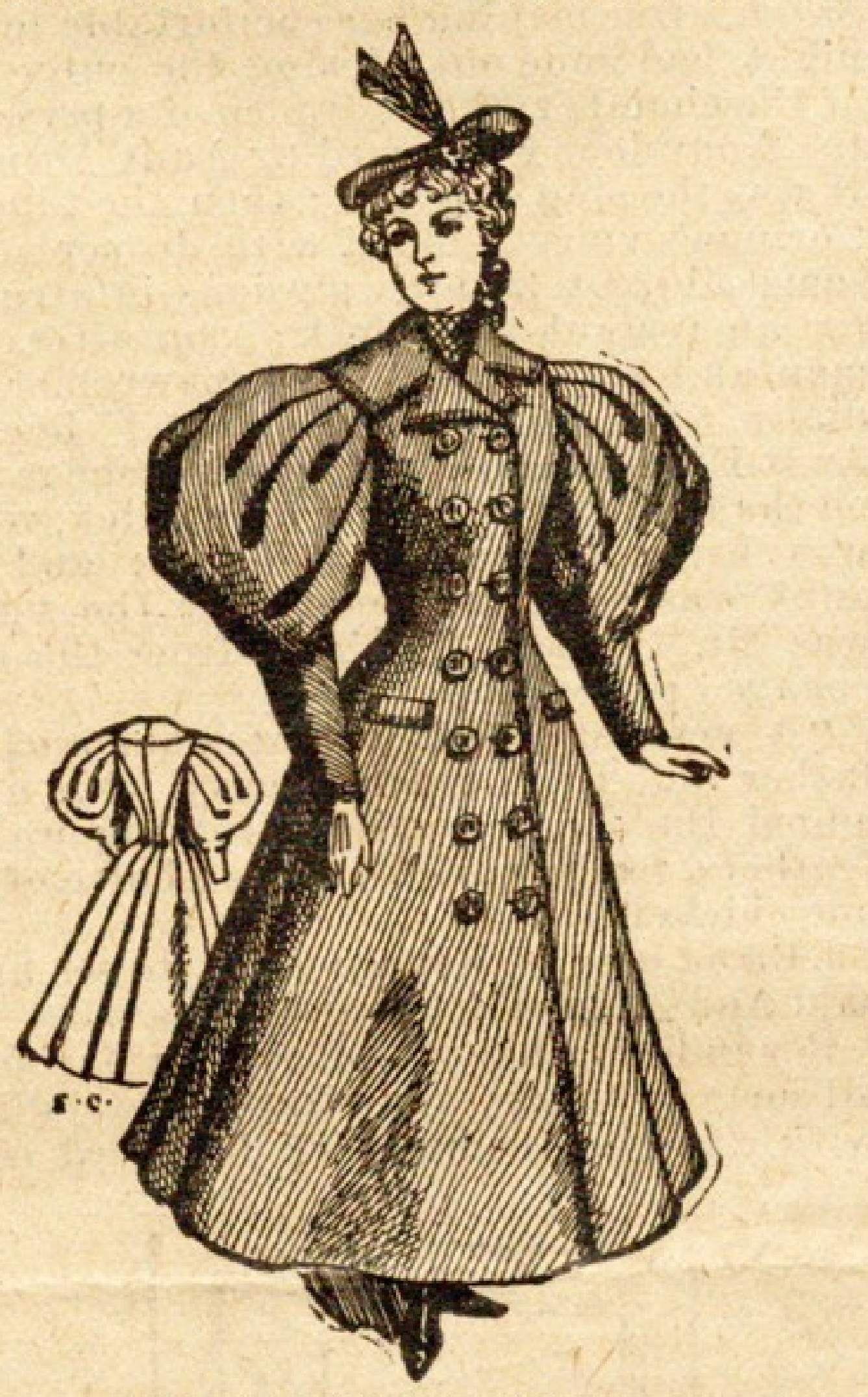
We have made special arrangements by which we can supply our readers with dress-patterns by mail, prepaid, at the nominal price of ten cents per pattern.

Each issue of the *Ledger*, hereafter, will contain illustrations of two or more new styles, for which patterns will be supplied to order. Parties ordering will please use a small sheet of plain writing-paper, small enough to go into an ordinary envelope, write name very plainly and give post-office and State, together with street and number, wherever necessary. Be careful to give correct bust-measure and the number of the pattern desired, using the number under the illustration. Inclose ten cents in stamps for each pattern ordered. State that you are a reader of the *Ledger*, otherwise these patterns will cost you 25, 30 or 35 cents each, as the case may be, these being the regular prices for which the patterns are sold.

The patterns selected for illustration in this issue are numbered 6642, 6611, 6660 and 6665.

Misses' Long Coat.

Hunter's green, rough-surfaced coating of medium weight was used for this stylish and protective top garment, a double row of handsome pearl buttons closing the double-breasted fronts. It is shaped according to the latest tailor mode, the fronts being widened to fall loosely below the hips, conforming in shape to the fashionable skirts. The loose, double-breasted fronts are deeply faced and reversed at the top in coat lapels that meet the ends of the deep, rolling storm-collar in notches. The lapels and collar can be raised and closed to the throat for better protection in inclement weather. The back and sides fit closely, with under-arm and side-back gores, and a well-curved center seam that ends in deep coat-laps below the waist-line. Rounded coat-plaits, that are marked by single buttons, give added fullness at the side back gores; the stylish ripple effect at the sides in the skirt portion distinguishing the new modes. The full gigot sleeves are shaped with a single seam, the fullness at the top being plaited into the arm's eye, a double seam of machine stitching simulating cuffs. Pockets are inserted on each front and concealed by laps that are neatly lined and stitched in tailor style. The edges can be plainly finished or machine stitched, as preferred. All kinds of rough or smooth-faced cloth, tweed, cheviot, serge or diagonal in checks, stripes, mixed, plain or fancy weave, will make stylish, comfortable and protective coats for storm or ordinary every-day wear.



6642—MISSES' LONG COAT.

Pattern **6642** is cut in sizes for 12, 14 and 16-year-old Misses.

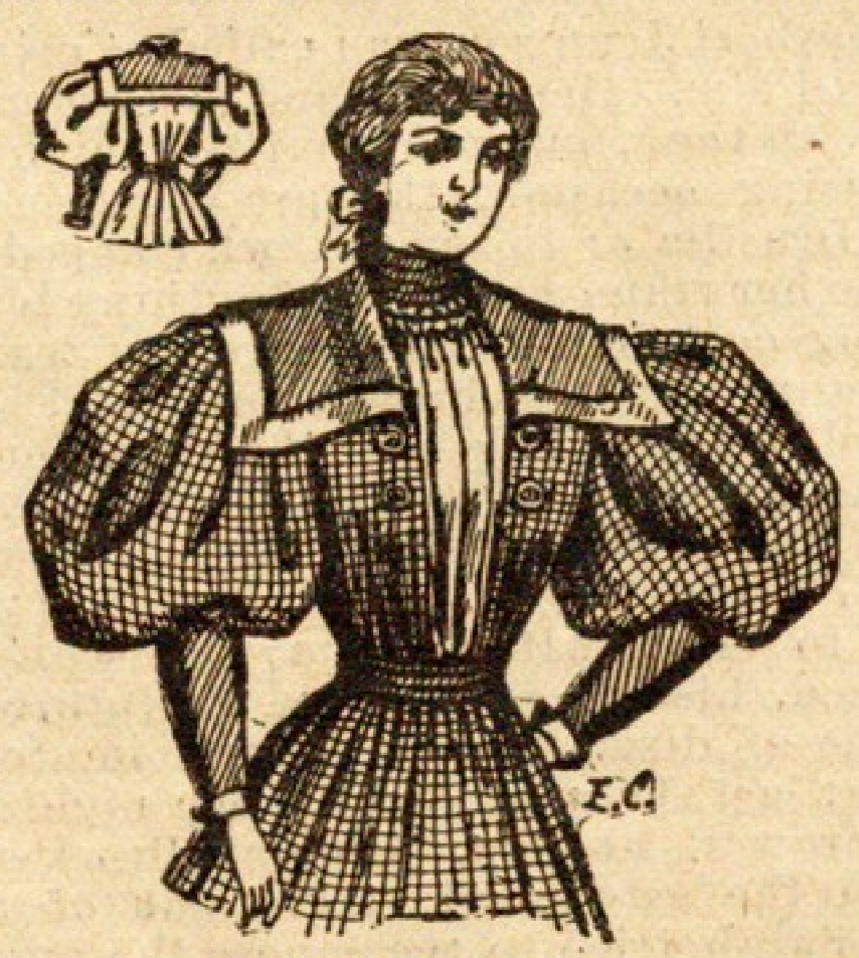
Quantity of Material 54 Inches Wide.

For Misses 12 years old	5	yds.
" 14 "	5¼	"
" 16 "	5½	"

Retail price of pattern **6642** is 35 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

Misses' Waist.

Red-and-blue checked wool suiting is here stylishly combined with red cashmere and blue-faced cloth, handsome pearl buttons decorating the fronts. The double sailor collar has the under portion of red and the upper of blue cloth, the under sleeves being of blue, with wrist facings of red rolled over for cuffs. This pretty waist is arranged over smooth-fitted linings that close in center front, the full fronts and back being smooth at the shoulders and gathered at the waist-line. The full vest is gathered in a double row of shirring at the top and falls in blouse style over the belt at the waist. It is sewed to the lining under the right and hooks over under the left front. A crush collar finishes the neck, meeting with end frills in back, a belt to match being worn around the waist. Full puffs are mounted over comfortable sleeve linings and droop stylishly at the elbow, the deep facings fitting closely to the wrists. Different color combinations can be stylishly effected by the mode, which is suitable for all dress fabrics.



6611—MISSES' WAIST

Pattern **6611** is cut in four sizes, for Misses of 10, 12, 14 and 16 years of age.

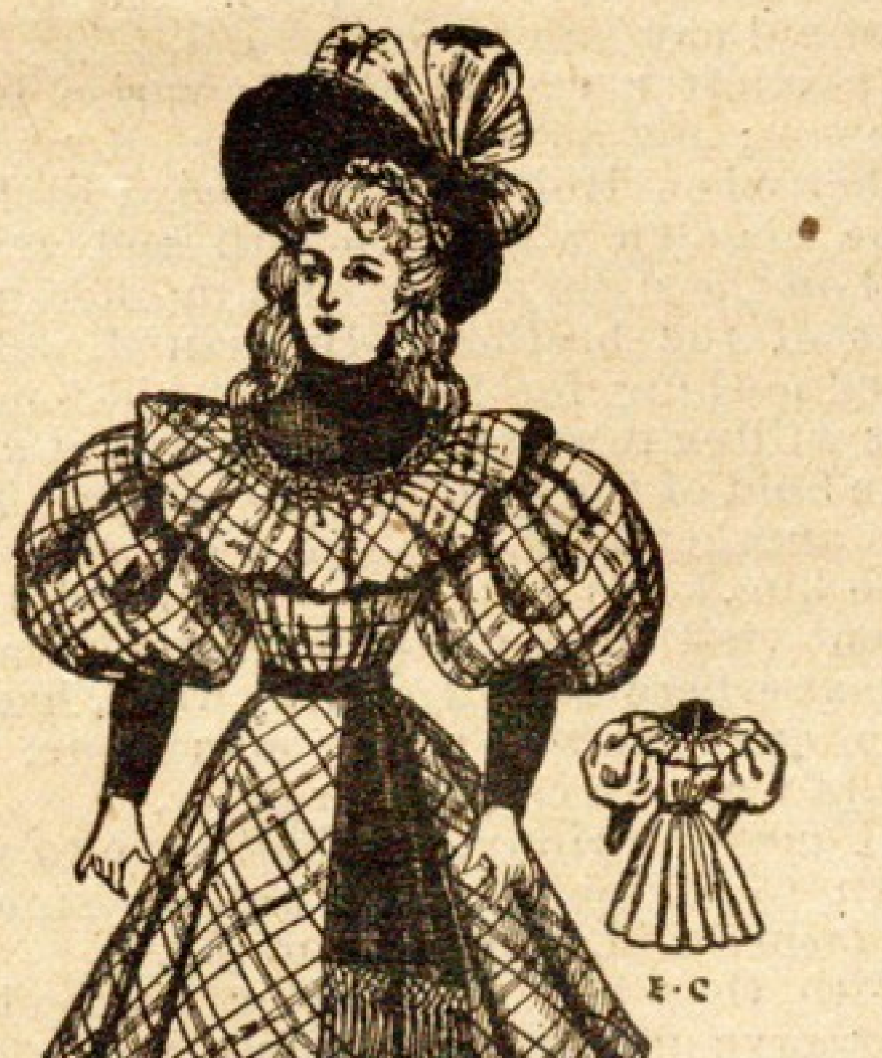
Quantity of Material 44 Inches Wide.

10 years old	2¼ yards.
14 " "	2½ "
16 " "	2¾ "

Retail price of pattern **6611** is 25 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

Girls' Costume.

Fancy plaid woolen goods are here associated with leaf-green velvet, gold gimp heading the ruffled bertha that outlines the rounded yoke. The full waist is arranged over a fitted lining, the smooth upper portion being faced in rounded outline with velvet, to simulate a yoke. The fullness at the lower edge is gathered front and back and arranged over the lining, the closing being in center-back, with small, gilt buttons and buttonholes. Full puffs are gathered, top and bottom, over comfortably-fitted linings that are faced to the elbow with velvet. A sash of velvet or silk encircles the waist, being tied in a knot at the left side, with fringed ends falling over the skirt. The fullness of the stylish skirt is gathered at the back, where the placket is finished at the top, pretty ripples falling all around from its circular shaping. Dresses in this style can be attractively made from silk, woolen or cotton fabrics, crépon, camel's hair, tweed, cheviot, merino and cashmere in plain, mixed, figured and striped varieties being handsome when combined with contrasting fabric or colors and decorated with fashionable garniture.



6660—GIRLS' COSTUME.

Pattern **6660** is cut in sizes for 6, 8, 10 and 12-year-old girls.

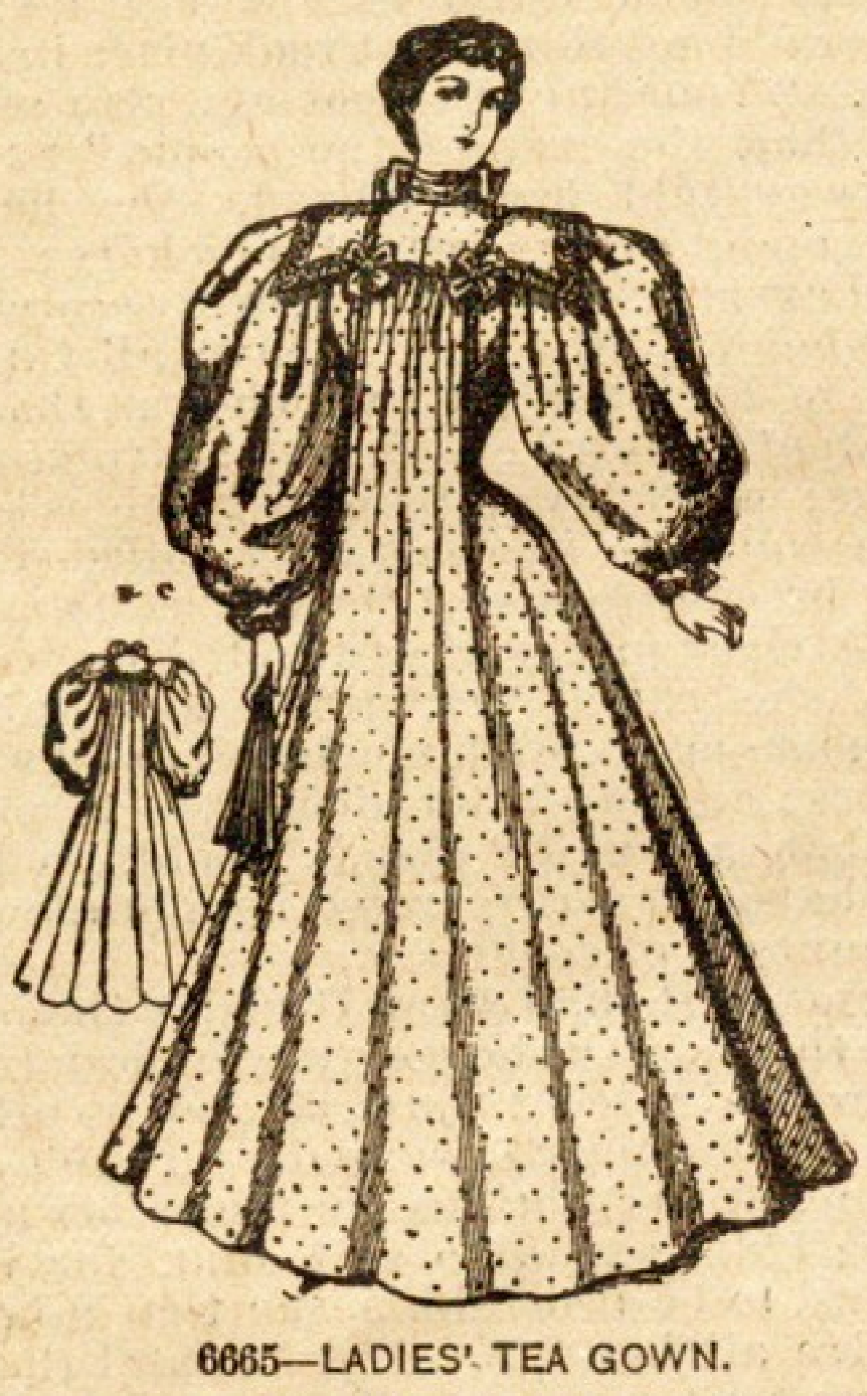
Quantity of Material 44 Inches Wide.

For girls 6 years old	2⅞ yds.
" " 10 " "	3⅛ "
" " 12 " "	3⅜ "

Retail price of pattern **6660** is 25 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

Ladies' Tea Gown.

Figured cashmere made this pretty morning wrapper, the decorations being insertion and satin ribbon. A glove-fitted body-lining of basque length is provided, over which the full back and fronts are disposed, the tops being shirred with a heading and applied at square-yoke depth. The upper part of the lining is faced to simulate a yoke, and the closing is effected invisibly in center front. The sides fit smoothly, displaying the graceful curves of the figure, and adding much to the graceful appearance of the gown. Stylishly pointed bretelles lie smoothly over the shoulders, the edges being trimmed with insertion and a twist of ribbon with rosettes at each side decorating the top. A stock collar of satin ribbon to match covers the close-fitting collar that finishes the neck. The fashionable Paquin sleeves are arranged over comfortably fitted linings, the wrists being finished with pointed bands or simulated cuffs. House gowns or wrappers of wool or cotton wash fabrics can be attractively developed by the mode, which is dainty enough for silk or more costly fabrics; with yoke and cuffs of contrasting fabric or color, a desirable combination can be effected.



6665—LADIES' TEA GOWN.

Pattern **6665** is cut in six sizes, viz.: 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inches bust measure.

Quantity of Material 44 Inches Wide.

For 32 inches bust measure	6¼ yds.
" 36 " " "	6½ "
" 40 " " "	6¾ "
" 42 " " "	7 "

Retail price of pattern **6665** is 35 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

The Future of the Walking Skirt.

There is no doubt that the bicycle has had a marked effect on costumes of all sorts and on the general wardrobe of the average woman.

"I am going away next summer to have a good time," says the young girl, "and I am not going to be bothered with so many frills and furbelows and fancy dresses as I have always had to carry about with me. I am going to have just the swellest bicycle costume and a second-best for stormy days and off occasions, a sort of toilet understudy, as it were. I am going to have a skirt of black satin or silk and a travelling dress, then I want some pretty waists, and I suppose I absolutely must take an evening dress or two, but two is the limit. I like dancing very much better in an ordinary skirt, with a pretty waist, and a great many of us are of the same mind."

And this girl voiced the sentiments of a large number of American women. The skirt, the fancy waist and the bicycle costume fill a great many of the needs of existence. The black or dark skirt means a silk petticoat and no white draperies to worry about.

A tidal wave of sense about skirts seems to be rolling in about us. We positively refused crinoline; we compromised on wide skirts, with haircloth and paper stuffs. Now we are getting tired of these, and while our skirts must have something to make them stand out, we are cutting them shorter for ordinary wear, and are the gainers by it.

This necessitates extra care as to foot gear, and some of the shoes for the coming season are works of art.

It is a shame to hide all these pretty shoes with trailing dresses; besides the long skirts spoil the shoes by covering them with dust and dampness, which is fatal to fine leather.

There is another point which is less talked about, although actually the most important of all, and that is the sanitary effect of sweeping draperies. Women are beginning to learn that the dust of public streets is neither wholesome nor safe to take home, therefore the slightly abbreviated skirt and handsome shoes.

There is already springing up a rivalry among women as to who shall be the best shod, that is, the most in accord with health and gracefulness, and all of this with an eye to the finest materials and the best workmanship. My lady's shoemaker is selected with quite as much care as her dressmaker, and in view of the present tendency to exercise and indulge in out-of-door sports, his mission is quite as important as any of her other interests.

Smooth-surfaced goods are to supersede all of the crimpy and crapy stuffs that have been the rage for some time past. Of course this change will not take place suddenly, but it is looming up in the not very distant future.

The new skirts are lined with fine percaline or silk, and a few of them have haircloth inner linings, but lighter skirts with the haircloth petticoats are preferred by ladies who have many costumes. A perfectly fitted haircloth petticoat with silk ruffles is thought to preserve the individuality of style that many women seem to cling to.

"I always know Miss A by the hang of her skirts," said one lady to another. And when Miss A's skirts were critically noticed, the reason was evident. The hang and curves and lines were perfect.

An effort is being made to decrease the weight of skirts, and this is best done by fine and light linings, and the use of under-skirts that give the spreading effect that is considered necessary to present styles.

How to Select a Husband.

An authority on mankind has given his views on the sort of men that make the best husbands. Among the really nice ones he classes the man who is fond of fishing, the lawyer, and the all-around journalist. He does not enthuse over the popular doctor as a husband, and a musical genius or a man of letters gives him cold chills and shudders. The author, he says, is so fond of his fine sentences that he is disagreeable when the baby cries, and makes himself generally odious about his food, the noise of the children, and any domestic infelicities that may come along. The musician cares for little except his art, and the wife is often secondary to the claims of the prima donna, or the sympathetic creature whose soul is as full of melody as his own.

All in all, the good journalist seems to have the most strong points. He is a bit of a philosopher, is likely to be practical, makes the best of what cannot be helped, and is full of alternatives. The lawyer is good to have in the house. He is likely to be alert, a good judge of human nature, a good talker, and quite as fond of listening as of hearing the sound of his own voice. He studies human nature at home as well as abroad, and is altogether a good fellow.

The politician is a diplomat, and while he sometimes leaves all of his diplomacy outside of his front door, this is not always the case. The bachelor comes in for a lively scoring, especially the one who claims that he has no small vices. Nature abhors a vacuum, and if there are no small vices, it is pretty safe to say that there may be some large ones that will be pretty difficult to deal with.

There is quite a bit of sound sense in these criticisms, and now it is in order for somebody to tell how a man should select a wife.

Corn Balls.

Sift thoroughly two and one-half heaping tablespoonfuls of yellow corn-meal, two heaping tablespoonfuls of flour, one tablespoonful of sugar, one saltspoonful of salt, and one teaspoonful of baking powder. Beat one egg and add to the dry mixture, with enough milk to make a drop batter. Stir in quickly one-half teaspoonful of melted butter. Beat well and drop by teaspoonfuls into smoking-hot lard.

The Ghostly Manifestations of Aunt Drusilla.*

BY ELIZABETH PALLEN,

Author of "The Man From Aldene."

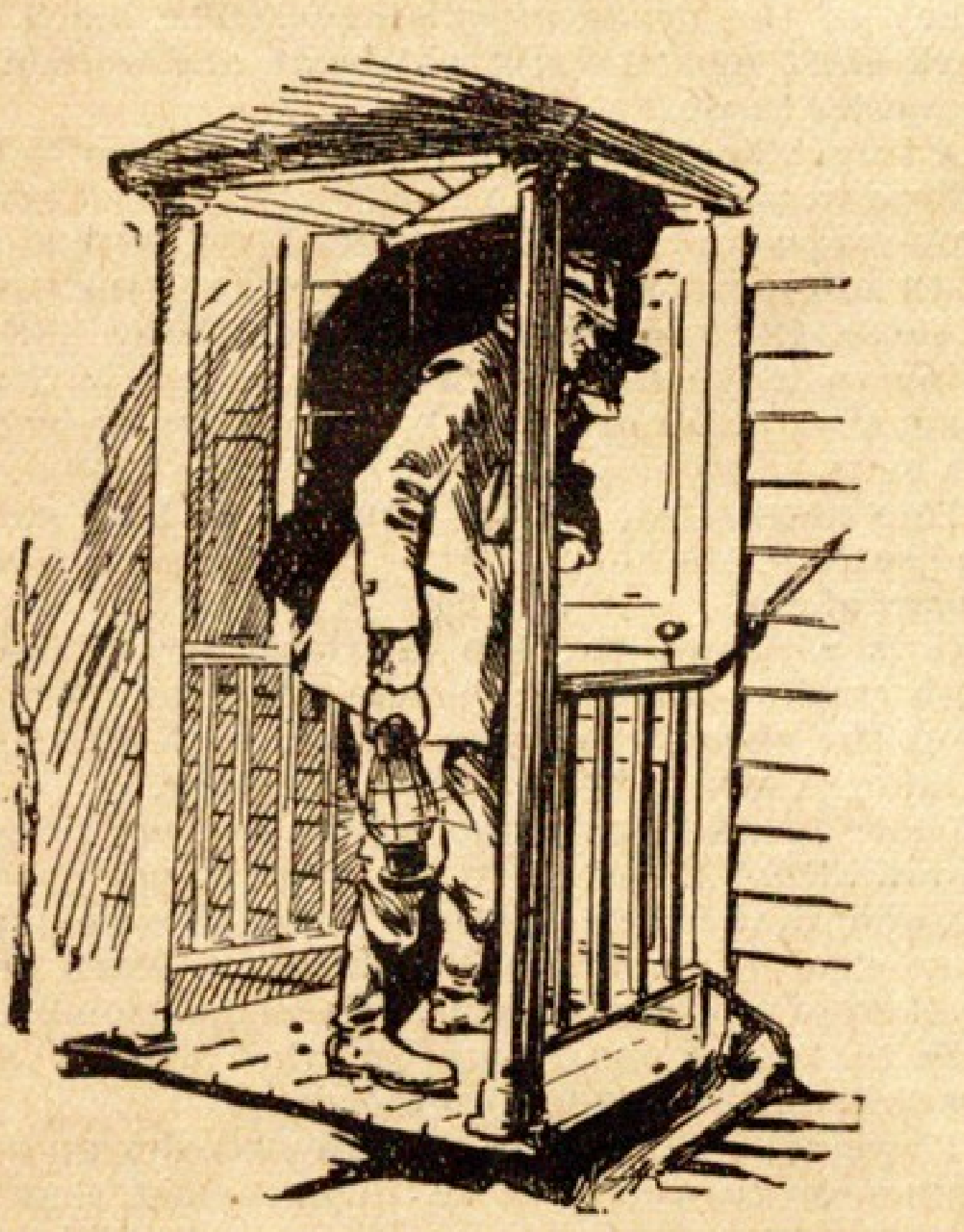
CHAPTER I.

When, looking out into the darkness before the winter dawn, the woman who lived nearest neighbor to Miss Drusilla Brockway could see no light in the window of the house on the hill, she thought that something must have happened. She told her husband so.

"Jotham, I wish't you 'd step over an' see that she ain't dead or anything," she added.

So Mr. Jotham Dunn clothed himself, lighted a lantern, and went out of the front door, which opened on the road.

"It don't seem nateral, not to go out to the barn, fust thing, to feed the critters," he observed, pulling on his blue mittens. "I don't see what you 're so turrible worried about, Maria."


"HOW CAN I? AIN'T THE HOUSE ALL LOCKED UP?"

But he went, with the protesting tongue and the prompt legs of a man who has a many-careful wife.

At Miss Drusilla's everything was dark and quiet. He waited a moment; then he knocked.

"I expect Drusilly 'll call me a fool for my pains," he muttered.

The answer came in a groaning voice:

"Oh, is that you, Mr. Dunn?"

"It is."

"I'm dretful glad you've come. But you 'll hev to let yourself in. I can't stir without its killin' of me."

"Why, Miss Drusilly, how you talk. What 's the matter with ye?"

"Oh, dear me, I've fell an' I expect I shan't never get up again. You must come right in."

"How can I? Ain't the house all locked up?"

"No, it ain't, and that's how— Well, never mind. You go round to the shed door, Mr. Dunn."

Having entered by that way, he soon heard about the misfortune. Miss Drusilla's cat had not come back in due season the evening before.

"Tommy, he knows when it rings nine o'clock, an' he generally puts for home. But last night he staid out, an' then come to the shed-door a-cryin', an' I got up to let him in. I was kind o' dazed wakin' up so sudden, an forgot to bolt the door again. I 'd just got back into bed when I thought of it, an' started right out to fasten up the door. I expect I ketched my foot on that braided rug, for I fell all in a heap. An' here I be. An' I guess my hip's broke," she finished, dolefully.

The neighbor looked about him for an idea of comfort.

"'Twas a mercy you was carryin' a taller candle instid o' one o' them kerrysene lamps."

"Yes. I s'pose I might have been burnt up, an' the house, too—an' I do' know but 'twould have been just as well," rejoined Miss Drusilla, who did not care to have the silver lining of such a new and dismal cloud turned forcibly out for her inspection.

So it was that Miss Drusilla Brockway, who had always been the most active and independent woman in the township, became bedridden and helpless. For a time, the neighbors took turns in caring for her; for though she was little loved, she was respected on account of her virtues, which were genuine, if crabbed. By and by charity cooled with custom; people began to think that they had none too much time for their own affairs; and finally it was suggested to her that she ought to have a housemate.

"Because there can't nobody, however glad an' willin', 'tend out all the time, an' you ought to hev a woman right where you can call on her, night or day," Mrs. Dunn told her.

Miss Drusilla took kindly enough from this good friend what she would have scorned and resented from another.

"I guess you 're right, Mis' Dunn. I 'm a turrible trouble to folks, an' I can't expect but what they will gredge what they do for me. Blood 's thicker than water; an' I'm goin' to write to some relations of mine to come. I don't expect they will, but I can't do no more 'n ask 'em to."

So, with unused and stiff penmanship, Miss Drusilla wrote a letter to her nephew, Holman Brockway, in Massachusetts, inviting him to come with his family to live in her house, which would be his after her death. She possessed a farm, mostly run out. A man could improve the land. She thought it would pay him to come.

This letter was a total surprise to the nephew; his aunt had quarreled with his father when Holman was a boy; each had gone his own way, with dull and grim ill will on the sister's part, with indifference on that of the brother. Holman Brockway cared nothing for his father's old feud; he was willing to accommodate his aunt and to take hold of the farm run to waste. There was another reason which weighed a little with him. His daughter, Corinna, during a recent visit to the city near which was the village where Miss Drusilla lived, had become engaged to a young man there. The lovers wrote to each other daily.

"I guess, Corinny, we shall have to move down to Maine, to save postage stamps," the father said, good-humoredly.

With that jest the matter was settled. They gave up the rented house, and went to dwell with Aunt Drusilla. The farm showed promise; the land had long lain idle; but Holman Brockway found it to have a soil mixed of sand and decomposed peat, which would grow big vegetables. Miss Drusilla had cultivated a small patch, enough for her own use, which she reluctantly praised as having "done as well as other folks' gardens, fur 's I know." Holman's wife thought the house rather inconvenient, but it was sunny and had a pleasant outlook. Corinna was happy because it was not a long walk to the ferry which connected the village with the city; and it is certain that Herbert Jennison spent his substance on riotous commutation tickets. At the landing he sometimes found Corinna waiting for him, and they enjoyed the stroll up the hill to the house, which stood on the crest, bristling with rocks and bushes. Corinna's parents liked the young man; he was clean and honest, eager to learn and to make his way in the world.

It was all smooth sailing until Aunt Drusilla blew up a gale. She was a formidable power as she lay in her bed in the ground-floor room which she reserved for herself. This was intended by the builder of the house for an office; Miss Drusilla's father had been a lawyer. It was a one-story room, projecting from the southern side of the house. Nothing flourished there but a few stalks of gaunt and hoary mullein; even in June the herbage yellowed—somebody had said that Squire Brockway's law was so dry that it made hay of the grass. Near the side window stood a birch-tree; it had grown up impeded by a sharp splinter of granite so that its roots were quite out of the ground, clasping the rock like skeleton arms. This tree, in its tattered shroud of white bark leaned toward the window as if to peer in. From the other, the front window, Miss Drusilla peered out; nothing that passed along the road could escape her notice. Neither did anything that took place in the house. "Your aunt has got an extra sense more than the rest of the people," Sarah Brockway told her husband. She heard every step, every fall of crockery; she sniffed every overbaked loaf, every scorched kettle-holder. She would have all things go on in her own way, which was that of her parents before her—curious sparings and parings; unwieldy stores of vegetables kept in the cellar, to be constantly culled over, or else breed diseases. A certain yellow-and-white-striped pitcher was devoted to yeast, which she called "emptins" and would have home-made, with much pains and with potatoes; a blue platter, dedicated to none else than a "b'iled dish," would, to her mind, have been desecrated by a burden of doughnuts or of cookies.

"Seems as though Aunt Drusilla thought all the things in the house were foreordained and predestinated to just so and no other way," Sarah mildly lamented. "I can't get the hang of her notions nor remember half of 'em; I 'd be glad to suit aunt, for it 's real hard to be bed-ridden, she that 's been so active all her life. And I expect that I have some set ways myself; we all have."

From morning to night Aunt Drusilla issued her orders through the half-open door of her chamber; Sarah found it no sinecure to be the lieutenant of an old-fashioned housekeeper. The longer that Aunt Drusilla was confined from contact with actual work, the harder she was to please; she expected the impossible and criticised with lavish vigor and homely sarcasm. But as yet she had not spoken of Herbert Jennison, because his visits were always made in the evening, and she had taken the habit of eating her supper early and beginning her night's sleep at twilight. To balance accounts, she awoke before the cocks had begun to halloo from barn to barn—and when Aunt Drusilla was once awake, there was no more sleep in the house. When the neighbors praised Sarah Brockway for being ready to sit down, in a white apron, to sew at ten o'clock in the morning, she modestly replied:

"You know I have to get up an hour and more before daylight, and I get ahead more than I care to sometimes."

But she said it with a patient smile on her kind face. She admitted, however, that "now an' then I get all nerved up, an' then Aunt Drusilla's voice goes right through my head."

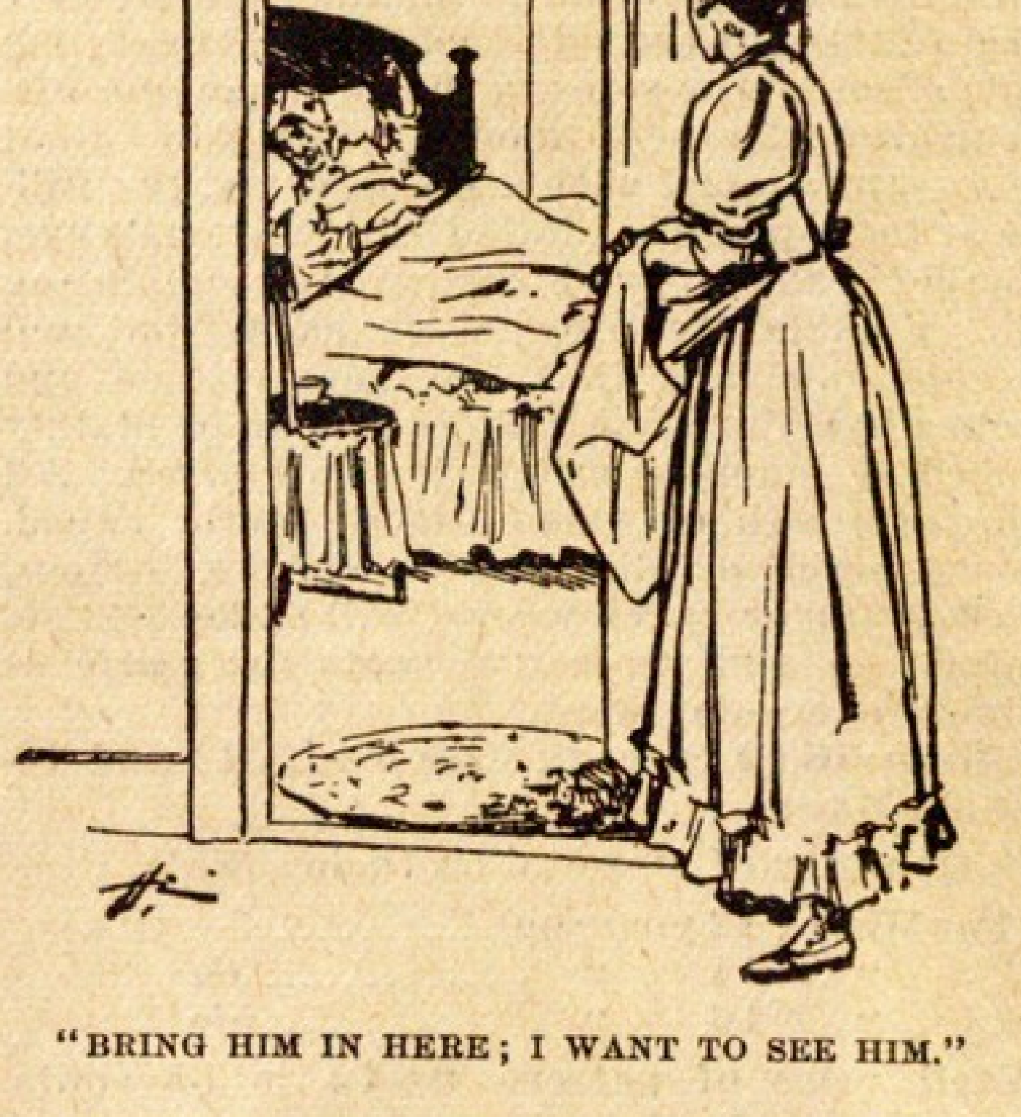
After a time, Corinna, having come to understand the tremendous will and the active veto power of Aunt Drusilla, began to dread lest the old woman should wish to interfere with her intended marriage. If the aunt called her, Corinna started and turned pale. The dreadful old creature, from her bed, ruled the household. She became always crosser, more dismal, more exacting; one could but pity her, yet she was not good to live with.

It chanced one afternoon that Corinna, preparing her aunt's tea, was absent-minded by cause of her fears for her love, and put in a double dose of the herb. Therefore, Aunt Drusilla's eyes, at eight o'clock in the evening, were set wide astare with assisted sleeplessness, and her ears were sharpened by the stimulus of the tea—green, green; she would drink no other. So, although Sarah, after making her comfortable for the night, had gone out, closing the outer door of the chamber, the entrance of a person at the front door was heard by Aunt Drusilla. It was the step of a man; then the tones of Corinna's voice blended with deeper notes; some sibilant little explosions interrupted for an instant their talk; soon after, Holman and Sarah greeted the newcomer cordially. What did all this mean? Because Aunt Drusilla could not imagine, she rapped on the floor with the pearwood stick, which was her summons. Sarah ran; and the aunt was soon informed that the visitor was Mr. Herbert Jennison, from the city, engaged to Corinna.

"A very excellent young man, and her father and I are much pleased with him," added the mother, mildly ruffling up her feathers, ready to defend the choice of her one chicken.

"Bring him in here; I want to see him," said Aunt Drusilla, grimly.

For in her unhappy old soul—a harbor of all sorts of cranky and piratical prejudices, with a roving commission to board other people's business—she remembered that in remote years her father had had a quarrel with a certain Jennison, who might be a grandfather of this young man. "And I'll let him know that I ain't forgot about that matter," she decided.


"BRING HIM IN HERE; I WANT TO SEE HIM."

CHAPTER II.

So Herbert Jennison was called; Corinna followed him. Her father and mother came also, with the vague idea that this might be a pleasing occasion, the presentation to Aunt Drusilla of the youth who hoped to become her grand-nephew. Anything but a pleasing occasion! The old woman reared her gaunt head, white-capped, and demanded to know if he was the grandson of Joel Jennison. He was. Had he ever heard of the lawsuit, Brockway against Jennison, in 1837? He had not. The old woman was ready to burst with venom; she scolded, screamed, hissed; she quoted Scripture in the line of dismal prophecy and imprecation; at last she snatched off her nightcap and threw it at him. Holman Brockway hustled the astounded lovers out of the room; Sarah tried to recompose the aunt's cap and temper, while the hag kept on shrieking: "They shan't marry! they shan't marry! I 'll die and I 'll haunt them!"

Corinna was terrified; she clung to her lover, trembling and sobbing. He told her that they ought not to mind the half-crazy words of a poor old woman; Aunt Drusilla was outrageous, to be sure, but it was partly nerves; she could not mean all that she said.

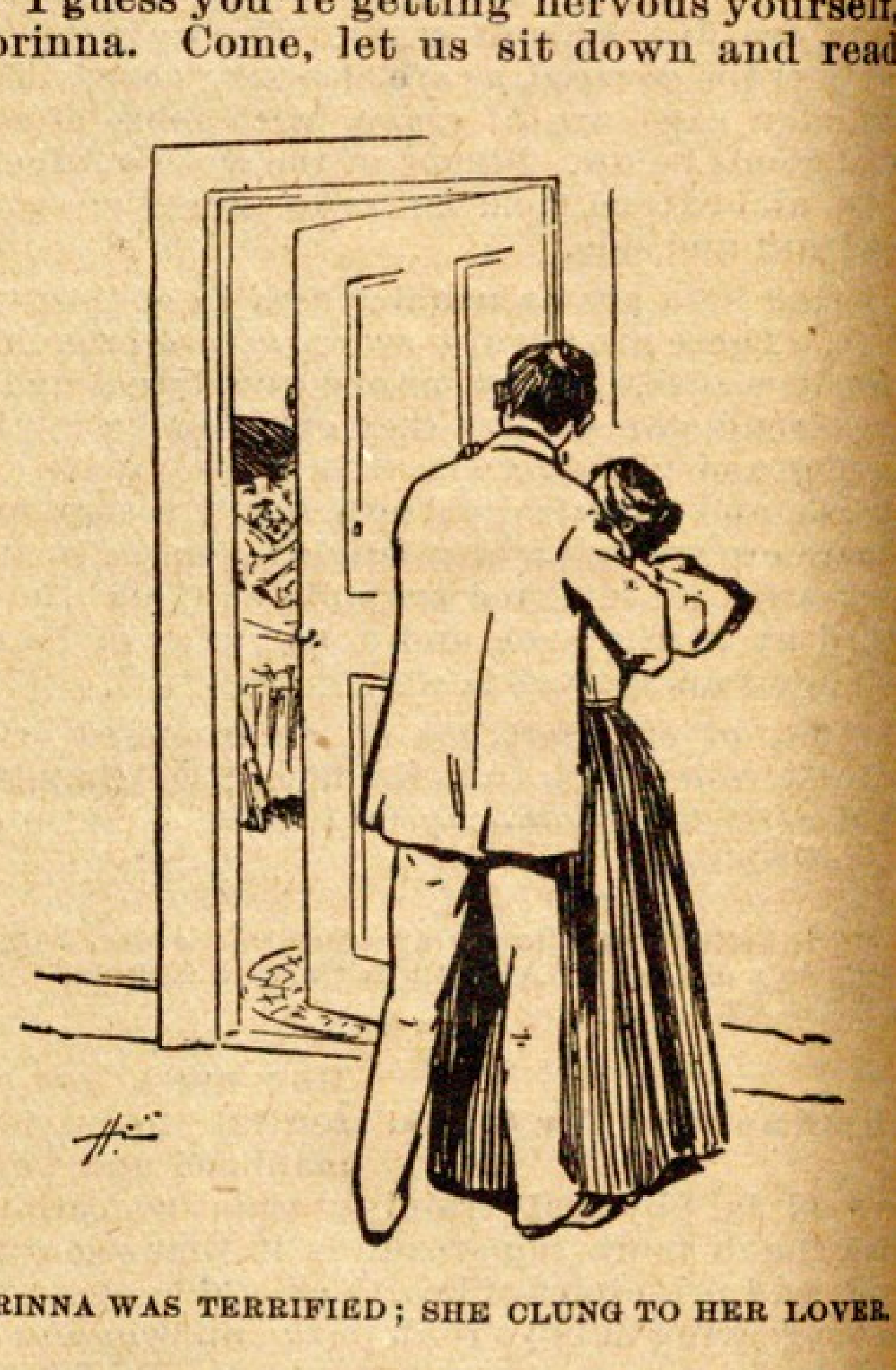
"We are doing no wrong, so we need not be afraid of men or ghosts," Herbert comforted the girl. "Poor old creature, she can't walk while she lives and she won't walk after she is dead."

"Do you suppose that she ever had anyone that cared for her, Herbert?"

"I should think not."

"Then I am sorry for her, and I won't blame her too much. But, Herbert, I am afraid of her."

"I guess you 're getting nervous yourself, Corinna. Come, let us sit down and read now." They were reading aloud a "Life of George Washington;" it appeared serially in one of the magazines. Herbert had, that evening, brought a new number from town.


CORINNA WAS TERRIFIED; SHE CLUNG TO HER LOVER.

It was quite true that Aunt Drusilla in all her life never had a lover, never received the attentions and the pretty speeches that cause a woman to value herself happily. She had always been plain, self-sufficing, even forbidding. But she had one moment of vanity. Some years before, the wagon of an itinerant photographer had broken down on the top of the hill in front of her house. It took hours to mend it; and at noon the man asked Miss Brockway if she would give him some dinner. In return he would make her a photograph, cabinet size and nicely finished. She set a meal before him. Afterward he sighted her with the camera, put away the negative, and promised to send the picture in a few days.

"I guess I ain't likely to see my own face without 'tis in the looking-glass," she said cynically, as he drove away.

But the vagabond artist kept his word and sent her the photograph.

"I ain't got nobody to give it to, an' I'll keep it myself. 'Tis wuth too much money to throw away," she told Mrs. Dunn.

Nobody imagined how greatly Miss Drusilla prized that picture, in which all the wrinkles and seams—not the autographs of gentle and mellowed experience, but of hard and suspicious ill-humor—had been smoothed out of her face. It flattered her up to the point of the credible. She was aware that she possessed no beauties; but this likeness softly persuaded her that she was not so bad-looking, after all. She came to take its testimony rather than that of the ancient mirror in its tarnished gilt frame, which, indeed, gave a greenish hue to her countenance, and perhaps elongated it a trifle. It may be that the photograph was so dear to her because, like a true friend, it took her at her best possibilities instead of her unlovely actuality. She was apt to frown at the mirror, and came as near as she ever did to a smile in looking at the photograph. The portrait, unframed, always stood in the same place, near to the corner of the mantelpiece, next to the side window of Miss Drusilla's chamber. The wan birch-tree, looking in, must have witnessed some oddly kind glances pass from her face to its likeness. The bit of pasteboard was the sole object of the tenderness of the old woman, were this from egotism or from a dim recognition of her better self.

"Miss Drusilly 's turrible proud of her picter. It don't handsome much, fur 's I can see. But I 'm glad if she takes comfort in anything," Mr. Dunn said to his wife.

Corinna and Herbert did their best not to offend the old woman again by sight or hearing of them. The girl had noticed that evening when, after the crisis of nerves, she carried out the aunt's small teapot, that the decoction had been of extra strength; and she took heed that in future it should be of a milder brew. But Aunt Drusilla was unmitigable. She would hear nothing in favor of young Jennison; his grandfather had eaten of the sour grapes of litigation, and she would set the grandson's teeth on edge with all sorts of hideous oddities. She would summon the family in haste, pounding with her stick; as soon as the door was opened she would scream disagreeable remarks at the lovers, order Jennison out of the house, call them ill names, and always contrive to make some dark allusion to her threat that she, after death, would haunt them. It was unbearable, but what could be done? There was no disciplining a poor, half-crazed, helpless creature like that. They came to take her chidings like the bluster and shriek of the wind around the house.

She grew gradually weaker, and as her forces lessened, her temper appeared somewhat milder. She sometimes thanked Holman Brockway when he lifted her.

---

* Copyright, 1896, by Bacheller, Johnson & Bacheller.

"You've been real good to me, for one that ain't a blood relation," she said to Sarah one day. But although she seldom railed at the lovers—as, indeed, she rarely had the opportunity—she never spoke a kind word to Corinna. For all that, the girl in her timid way tried to please the aunt. An hour before the old woman died, she spoke again of the marriage with Herbert Jennison, but only to repeat her uncanny threat: "I'm going to die, and I'll haunt you!"

It could be only felt as a relief when, at last, Aunt Drusilla was laid away in the village burying ground, under the fir trees.

"Now she can rest—and give other folks a rest, too," commented Mr. Dunn, returning from the grave.

The strain had been long upon Sarah and Corinna; they felt depressed and nervous, after the fashion of weary women. It was time to plant early peas; so that for Holman Brockway there was work in the open air, which is the universal solvent for all imaginary and some real troubles. The young people were to marry the next October; they would live with the parents of Corinna, and had decided to use Aunt Drusilla's room as their own parlor. Herbert thought that the furnishing of it would be a wholesome and cheerful occupation for Corinna.

"First, it can be well scrubbed and aired to drive out the blue devils," said this practical lover; "then Corinna and her mother must come in town, and we will go to choose the furniture and the carpet. We may as well get the room ready now and have some good times evenings in it. I declare, I feel next door to married when Corinna sits by the lamp sewing, while I read aloud."

So the room was freshly painted and papered; white muslin curtains were hung at the windows; a three-ply carpet of modest colors and pattern, and a sofa and chairs covered with blue plush—very cheap and stylish, the dealer had called them—made up a little parlor which, if not artistic, was cozy, and the pride of the heart of a good little girl. When her father was ushered into the transformed room he admired it greatly. Then he began to look vaguely about him as if missing something.

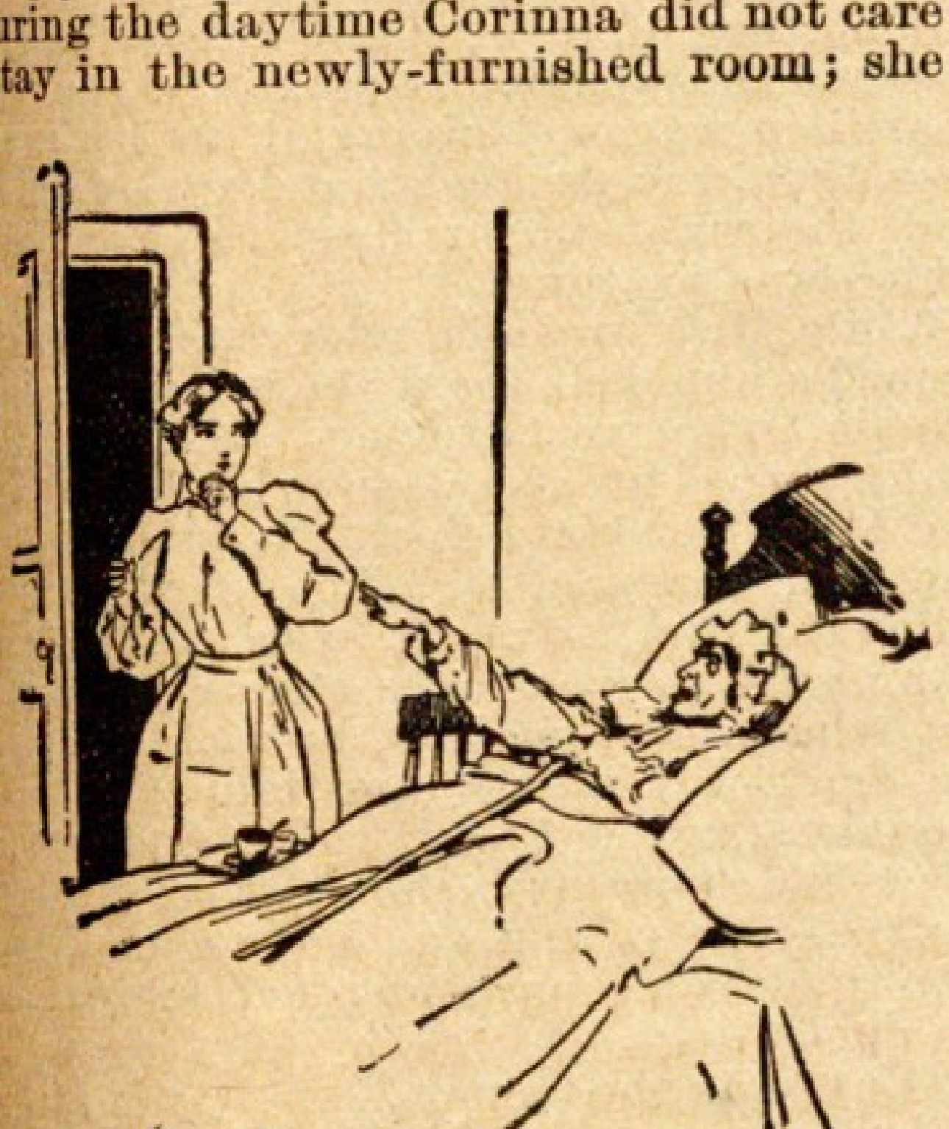
"I seem to want to see Aunt Drusilly's picter in its place again," he said.

"Oh, no, father. It is our parlor now," Corinna protested.

"I know that, daughter, an' you've made it real pretty. But I guess we hev to remember that 'twas Aunt Drusilla's room before that, an' that we owe the house an' farm an' all to her. She was aggravatin', I know; but she's gone where she sees things different. I expect she looks some like her photograph now, all kind of smoothed out and pleasant. It would appear to me like rememberin' of her at her best an' gratefully, to set her picter up where she always kept it. An' it can't hurt you an' Herbert none, Corinny. I should call it a just an' a right act on your part."

Holman Brockway had a streak of firm will, a mild form perhaps of that of his litigious father and his crabbed aunt. He spoke gently, but Corinna knew that there was no opposing him. "I shall simply die to have Aunt Drusilla always before my eyes," the girl complained. But her lover persuaded her that it was better to content her father. "We may get to be quite fond of the old girl—she looks so pleasant; and then she can't talk, which is an advantage," he said, jestingly.

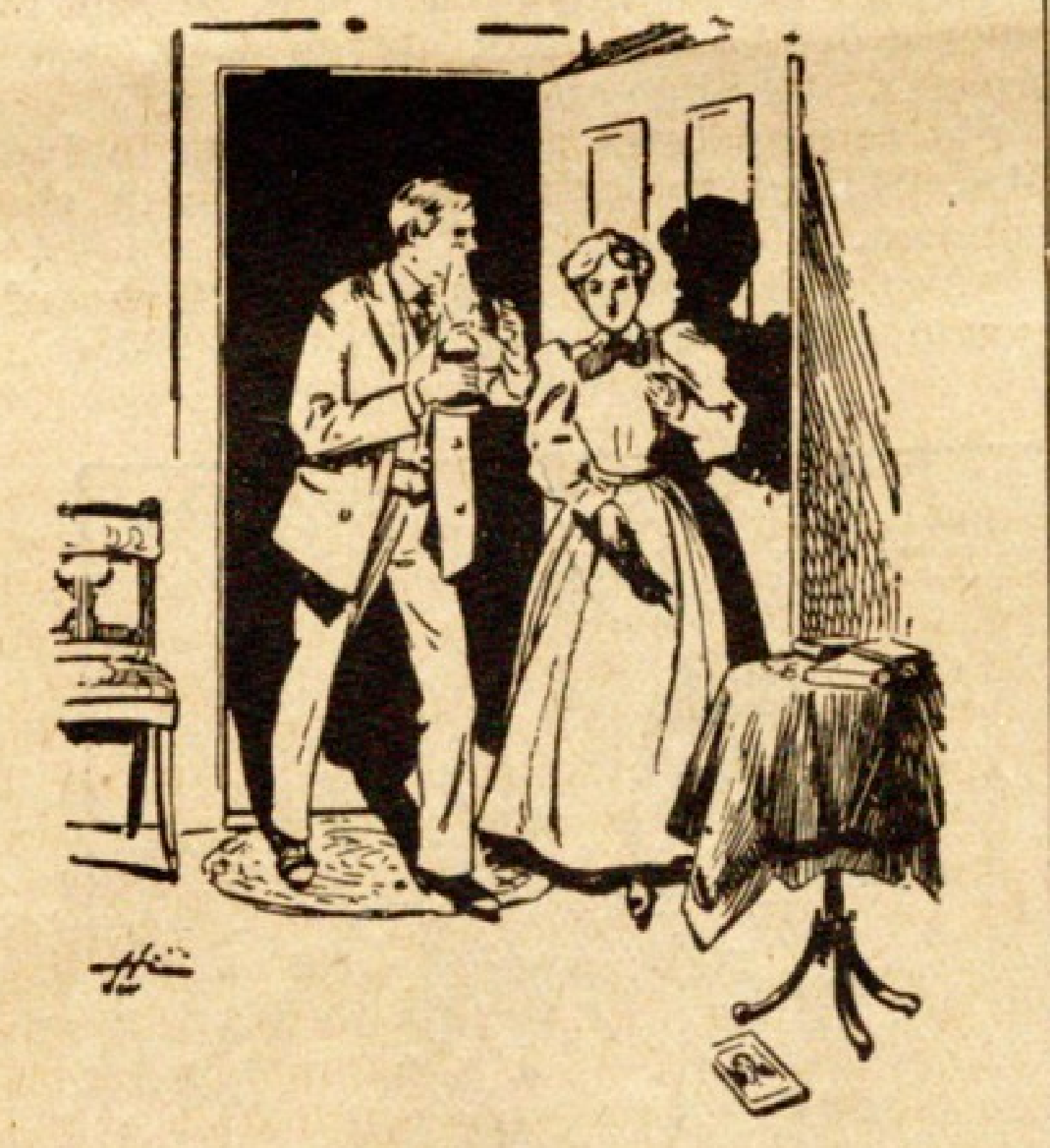
During the daytime Corinna did not care to stay in the newly-furnished room; she had a tender little instinct that she would enjoy it only in company with Herbert. She dusted it carefully every morning; then went out, closing the door behind her, not reëntering there until the evening brought her lover. He came by the electric cars now; a new suburban line had lately been completed. At 7:55 she could see the headlight at the turn of the road, in two minutes more she heard the hoarse hum of the wheels; at 7:58 Herbert would swing himself off the car, which proceeded just as if it were not deprived of its one valuable freight. At eight precisely, Corinna's parents having greeted her lover, the young pair would find themselves in their own little parlor. They were not sure whether they enjoyed that room most in the present or in anticipation. It was very cozy for engaged people; they divined that it would appear still cozier when they should be married.



"I'M GOING TO DIE, AND I'LL HAUNT YOU."

CHAPTER III.

But from the day that Aunt Drusilla's picture was restored to its old place Corinna's pleasure in the room was subtly blighted. The next morning when she entered it, singing, with a duster in her hand, the first thing which she saw was the photograph, that lay face downward upon the floor about three feet in front of the fireplace, as if it had leaped from its station on the mantel shelf. Corinna took it up and replaced it, without thought. But she felt a curious little shudder. She went on singing in her clear and pleasant voice, while she dusted the books, arranged in neat radiation around the crocheted lamp-mat on the table in the center of the room. All at once she saw the photograph stir, then stand upright, totter and spring toward her, falling to the floor. A superstitious terror seized Corinna; her breath stopped and her hands became cold and moist as she stood, not daring to remove her gaze from the object of her fears. She could hear her mother beating eggs in the kitchen, her father chopping wood in the barn, the noise of the electric car that had passed the house and was speeding down the slope of the hill toward Neighbor Dunn's. These every-day sounds dissolved the spell. Corinna would not be silly; she finished her task, dusting everything conscientiously. But until she was quite ready to leave the room she left the photograph where it lay. Finally she picked it up, averting her eyes from it, and set it in its place. Then she hastened away.



SHE SAW THE PHOTOGRAPH TOTTER AND SPRING TOWARD HER.

That evening, when Corinna, accompanied by Herbert, opened the door of the parlor, the likeness of Aunt Drusilla was lying upon the carpet.

"The old lady has tumbled off her perch," said Herbert, with scant reverence. And he set her up again.

He did not see the fright in Corinna's eyes. All that evening the girl sat with her shoulders toward the picture; if it sprang down again she did not wish to see that. Once, indeed, it seemed to her that she heard a light thing strike on the floor; but at that moment Herbert was reading aloud and the car was passing, so that she could not be certain. When he arose to go away she followed him into the entry without looking back.

At all events, the following morning she found the photograph prone upon the carpet, and there she let it remain. The strange contest of wills between herself and the uncanny piece of pasteboard dispirited and wearied Corinna. Finally she put the photograph away in the table-drawer and hoped for peace. She did not wish to confide her fear to Herbert; of course, it was a fanciful dread, and he would laugh at it. Neither would she let the charm of the parlor be spoiled for him as it was for her.

But one evening, as she watched for Herbert's coming, her father, who was adjusting a window-shade roller in her little parlor, called to her:

"Corinny, where is aunt's picter?"

She saw the gleam of the car-light down the road, but she must run to find the photograph. Her father took it in his hand.

"A pleasant likeness. Looks almost pooty," he commented. He stood holding it, studying the face. Then he heard the sound of the approaching car. "There, run along, Corinny," he bade her, good-naturedly.

And, not to mar the lovers' meeting, he remained just where he was, gazing at the picture until he judged it discreet to appear and welcome young Jennison. Then he set Aunt Drusilla in her place and went out into the entry.

"Glad to see you, Herbert," he said, cordially.

But later that evening Corinna heard again the light impact of the pasteboard as it fell to the floor; and again she would not look at it, but waited until the wholesome daylight should companion her, when she would lift the evil thing and put it in its own place.

More than once in the days that followed Corinna thought of destroying the photograph, but that would displease her father. Moreover, what would be the use, since if the ghost of Aunt Drusilla really took that means of disturbing the lovers, no doubt her unkind spirit could find other ways to the same end. Corinna decided to bear these *post-mortem* spites as she had borne the whims and railings of Aunt Drusilla in the flesh.

But the girl began to grow pale and thin; there was an anxious pucker in her pretty, white brow; her manner was listless and nervous. Her mother noticed this change in Corinna; but having decocted and prescribed a tonic of bitter herbs, she plunged headlong into "spring cleaning," which from that moment occupied all her mind. Besides, Corinna declared that nothing was the matter with her. "And spring weather lets everybody down," Sarah Brockway concluded.

One gusty, rainy evening of late April it seemed to Herbert that as he and Corinna entered the parlor together, she started as if frightened.

"What is it?" he asked her.

"Nothing, nothing," answered Corinna.

He looked at her. Her lips were apart with fear; she was pale, staring at something that lay upon the floor near the fireplace. Herbert was carrying the lighted lamp; he went forward to examine the object.

"Why, it is only Aunt Drusilla's photograph."

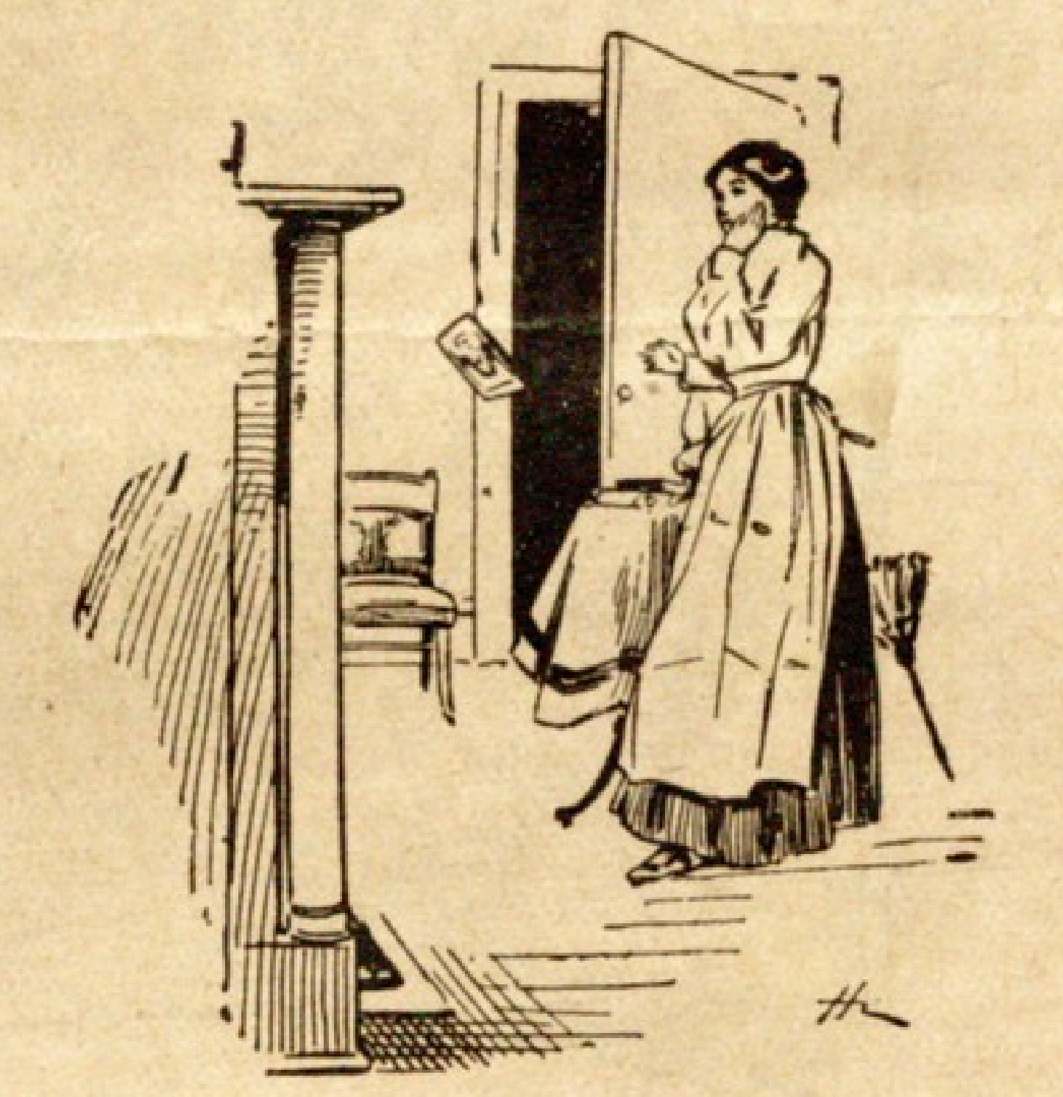
He picked it up and set it on the mantel-shelf.

"But—but—how came it there?" said the girl, with a shivering voice.

"My dear child, the wind blew it down. These old houses let in all sorts of little draughts around the windows."

"No, it was not the wind," said Corinna, with the quiet of hopeless conviction. "Herbert, I meant not to say anything about it, because, of course, you will laugh at me. Every evening, whether the wind blows or not, that picture quits its place. Every morning I find it on the floor. While you are reading to me, that dreadful thing totters forward and then leaps off the shelf toward us. I didn't want you to know about it. I thought I could keep it from you, because you always sit with your back that way. But to-night we stayed awhile talking with father and mother—and Aunt Drusilla had been mentioned. And—and—Herbert, I'm afraid of her. You know what she said—that she would haunt us!" The blue eyes of the girl were strained with terror. There was a husky tremor in her voice.

"Don't be afraid," said her lover. "That was easy for Aunt Drusilla to say; but they don't come back from the other world. She didn't have any commutation ticket when she went over the Stygian ferry that we read about, and old Mr. Charon, of Charonsville, won't deadhead her this way again."



"WHAT IS IT?" HE ASKED HER.

So, staid with reason and comforted with the classics—or rather such very slight and second-hand acquaintance with them as they had—the lovers passed a pleasant evening. Thrice, indeed, did the likeness of Aunt Drusilla stir and pitch forward as if to menace them, then stagger and drop to the floor. Each time did Herbert, who had seated himself where he could keep an eye on the image of Drusilla, take her up untenderly and replace her on the shelf.

"Will you set where you're sot?" he inquired of her sternly, quoting an admonition of Neighbor Dunn to his youngest child, who on one occasion in his presence had been an unquiet passenger in the electric car.

But 'tis no use jesting with ghosts; for all that we call them "old truepenny" and "old mole," they chill the marrow of the bones and prick the hair on end. So when Herbert had set Aunt Drusilla in place for the third time, he ceased reading and fell on thought. Corinna watched him anxiously. Finally he spoke, consulting his timepiece:

"We will read thirteen minutes more," said he. "Then we will listen, at the same time keeping our eyes fixed on that bewitched old photograph. Unless I am mistaken, Corinna, we shall learn something to our advantage."

She was puzzled, but all her trust was in Herbert. Ten minutes were gone, and she hitched her chair a little nearer to his. When he held out the dial of his watch to show her that twelve minutes had passed she slipped her little finger into his hand with the action of a timid child. Then they heard a far-away sound that mixed with the wind and the rush of the rain, but was more unvarying and stronger than those.

"That is the electric car," said Herbert. "Steady, Corinna! Look at your aunt."

And, truly, just as the car thundered by, the photograph of Aunt Drusilla reared itself like a viper and leaped from the mantel-shelf. Corinna gave a slight scream and started to her feet. But Herbert was laughing.

"I ought to have thought of that at once," he said. "Don't you understand, Corinna? There's a ledge of rock that runs across the street and by this side of the house. That is the reason that the grass cannot take deep root here, and turns yellow; that is why the old birch has pulled up stakes to run away. When the car goes over the ledge, it jars this room and makes the photograph jump. That is all, truly, my dear girl. I will lay the ghost for you; I will bring a neat and rather solid frame for the picture to-morrow. And I warrant you that from this out Aunt Drusilla will behave herself."

Herbert kept his word, bringing a heavy standing frame in gilt metal. Holman Brockway thought it very handsome in the future son-in-law to do such honor to the aunt who had been so ungentle to the lovers.

"I take it very kind of you, Herbert," he said. "'Tis right, 'tis accordin' to religion. You're kind o' heapin' coals of fire onto her head, a-gittin' that nice frame for her picter. It shows a good disposition in you, Herbert. An' that promises well for Corinny's happiness. I guess she's doin' well to marry you."

And Aunt Drusilla—as woman, ghost or photograph—troubled them no more.

THE END.

◆

BABY'S NAP.

How sound the little creature sleeps
Within its cradle nest!
How soft the long-drawn, gentle breath
That marks its quiet rest!

One dimpled hand, with finger-tips
As rosy as the dawn,
And nails like tiny seeds of pearl,
Rests on its robe of lawn.

Just look, my friend! the cherry lips
Are parted with a smile;
The face is full of innocence,
Devoid of sin or guile.

No wonder angels gather round
Its simple cradle bed;
No wonder Heaven sends blessings down,
Like sunlight, on its head.

A baby fair, a baby sweet—
Such as, long, long ago,
Were we, before we drank such draughts
Of sin and care and woe.

There! cover up the little hands,
And shade the smiling face;
We can but pray that God will guide
Dear baby by His grace.

◆

SUPPLY AND DEMAND.

An expert in the construction of machinery made the remark, not long ago, that the possibilities of mechanics had up to date scarcely been foreshadowed.

Although this is a very bold assertion, it is one that very few people are willing to argue against. When we look back fifty years and see what crude and primitive machinery was used for manufacturing and for all sorts of power, we can but wonder what the next half century may bring forth. Certainly, if the change shall be as marked in the future as it has been in the past the assertion just referred to may not be very far out of the way. There is one point on which we seem to make very little advance, and that is in utilizing the force stored up in fuel. There is all the way from sixty to ninety per cent. of dead waste in coal. Whether we do not handle it properly, whether the furnace and consuming apparatus is faulty, or whether, as many people more than half suspect, we work from an entirely mistaken estimate of it and its use, is an unsettled question. The saving of one per cent. of coal is a fortune when we consider the amount consumed in large plants. Two per cent. on a million of tons makes an enormous aggregate in the course of a few years.

Water power is the simplest, least expensive and most valuable of all forces. Wherever there is a watershed and a rainfall, the ingenuity of man may pipe a stream to a lower level and secure power enough to accomplish wonders in the way of manufactures. But there are localities where water was not to be had. Then steam was used. Then, when economy became a great object, we discovered that steam was expensive, for the reason that only a very small amount of the latent power in fuel can be utilized. And now that undefinable, fugitive, wonderful, mysterious element that we call electricity is being harnessed to wheels and pulleys, and is likely completely to revolutionize the manufacturing interests of the country.

Among the great discoveries of the future are how to increase the strength of metals, how to overcome as far as possible the influence of gravitation, and how to get the most value out of fuel. Another want of the age is a continuous, steady and manageable power that can be conveyed to dwellings or to remote districts at a small cost. Thus far electricity is the only thing that promises any solution to this problem.

There are immense fortunes in store for intelligent inventors, and even though the improvement in a machine, a process or an art saves but a trifling sum per day or hour, this means immediate profit and the possibility of greater advancement in the same direction. We are overcoming obstacles, making the elements subservient to our wishes, producing cold where formerly there was heat, and creating warmth in chilly seasons.

THE PLAID LADY.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

"There is the lady in the plaid cloak again," people who were strangers in Dairytown used to say. "I wonder what she runs about so much for?"

Old residents, however, could have told them that the lady in plaid was Mrs. McMurtry, the richest woman in the county; that her running about always had something to do with the mortgages she held on most of the outlying farms, and that, rich as she was, she had worn the plaid cloak and no other for twenty winters. So that children were in the habit of calling her "The Plaid Lady;" and, indeed, some grown-up folk also, in moments of irritation.

"How often does the plaid lady come here, Amanda?" Amelia Perry asked of her sister one day.

The plaid lady held a mortgage on their little place, which they had not been able to pay off since their father died.

"Well, only about once a week," Amanda replied. "It does seem oftener, though."

"Well, Amanda," said Amelia, "it seems to me as if I never look out of the window but I see that plaid cloak coming up the path. Sometimes I wish I could die rather than go through the talk about the trouble that has got to come. What good does it do? Don't she know I'd pay off that mortgage if I *could?* And I know that if I *can't* she'll foreclose. That is all right; all just. Poor pa borrowed the money, and if we can't pay it, why the little place has got to go, but all this going over and over it is enough to drive one crazy. And she always goes away crying, 'Make an effort, make an effort—you'll wish you had when it is so I have to do what I shall be sorry to do.' Oh! if she isn't coming now. There are wheels."

"No, it's the minister's wife," said Miss Amanda, peeping over the kitchen curtain. "Which of us looks decentest to go to the door? I can put on my fichu in a minute, and you've been crying, Mely, and a person's nose and eyes *will* get red if they cry. You come in after awhile. You know what a gossipy place this is, and if Mrs. Becker was to say to her mother that she hoped nothing unpleasant had happened to the Miss Perrys, for she felt sure Amelia had been shedding tears, why the old lady would tell the next person that called."

So Amelia ran upstairs to bathe her eyes and make herself tidy. While Miss Amanda, with her mouth full of pins, took the muslin fichu she had just been pressing from the clothes-horse, and put it on as she walked slowly down the front entry, so that she was ready to open the door briskly when the bell rang, and cry out:

"I saw you getting out of the buggy, Mrs. Becker, and ran to let you in. How well you look. How are the children, and your mother, and Mr. Becker? What a touching sermon he gave us last Sunday. I saw twenty people in tears."

"It seemed appropriate to the recent loss Deacon Dewey has suffered," replied Mrs. Becker. "Generally Mr. Becker feels that he ought to be cheerful—but the sad event was so recent."

"His second wife, wasn't it?" queried Miss Amanda, wishing that Amelia would not pull so many drawers out in the room overhead, where she was making her toilet, or scuttle over the floor so often.

"His *second* wife? His *third*," said Mrs. Becker, trying to be demure. "Ma says—you know ma will have her laugh—she says *she's* not a minister's wife, if *I* am. Ma says she saw him looking out for the fourth last Sunday. She says she wasn't sure whether it was Martha Hopkins or you he decided on, but I said: 'Well, Amanda Perry won't have him, I'm sure.'"

"He'll not look at me," said Amanda, "so there's no use refusing him before I'm asked, and Martha Hopkins despises him on the face of the earth. Besides, we're both too old. When one has got to Deacon Dewey's time of life, he likes girls of sixteen best."

"I'll tell ma that," said Mrs. Becker; "she'll laugh."

"Poor, dear Mrs. Dewey! It was really sad, though. I always thought she was very nice, though ma thought—"

But what ma thought remained untold, for at this moment the postman flew in at the gate, tapped on the window and presented a letter.

Miss Amanda glanced at it, and saw that the name of some legal firm was printed on the left-hand upper corner of the envelope.

Full of apprehension, and anxious that Mrs. Becker should not see this, she crammed the letter into her pocket and went on chatting.

"And how about the fair? When is it to be? Has the committee decided?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Becker, enthusiastically. "We want it to open Monday fortnight. We are going to have a New England kitchen. And I'm going about begging loans of china cups and saucers and plates and everything. And we thought *you* would let us have some; we knew you would if you could."

"We'll let you have everything but the best dinner and tea set," said Miss Amanda. "I draw a line there, and so does Sister Amelia. But we've oceans of common things, and we'll wash them all up before they are wanted."

Then Mrs. Becker became profuse in thanks, and Miss Amelia coming in, they were all very cheerful, the Misses Perry making great efforts to appear so, and the minister's wife seeing through them very clearly, but kindly sympathizing for all that.

At last she said good-bye, and the sisters pulled the parlor shades down again and went up to their room, where they divested themselves of their adornments, and put on their wrappers to go on with their ironing. Not until this was done did Amelia say:

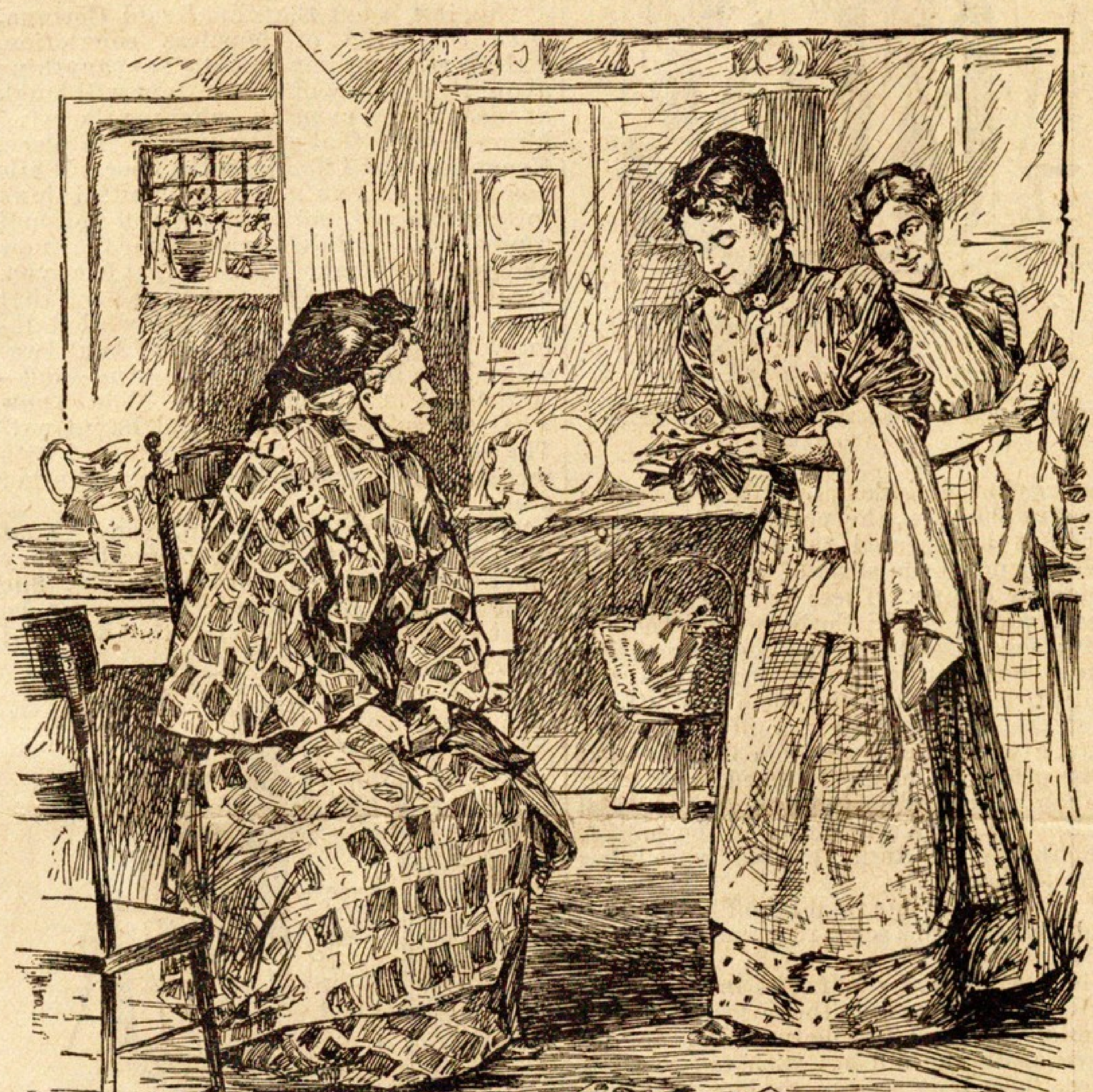
"Didn't the postman bring a letter, Amanda?"

"Yes," replied her sister. "It's from some lawyer."

Amanda laid the letter on the table, and the young women looked at each other sorrowfully.

The little house was very plain, but they had been born there, their parents had died there, and then they hardly knew how they should feel without that small property, or, indeed, how they should live.

Then, sitting down together on a chintz-covered lounge, they began to read. As they did so, the expression of their faces slowly changed. They began to utter little "Ohs" and "Ahs," and as they came to the bottom of the last page, they dropped the letter on the table and hugged each other.



AMELIA COUNTED OUT THE MONEY.

"*Do* you think we are awake?" asked Miss Amelia.

"I am," said Amanda. "I feel as if the idea of losing our home had been a bad dream. But, dear me! we ought to have trusted in Providence. Pa was a righteous man and ma a Christian woman, and some one in the Bible says, 'I was young, and now I'm old, but never have I seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging bread.' I know I'm not quoting just right, but it's close to it. I had no idea Great-uncle Peter, whom we never saw in our lives, would leave us anything."

"Nor I," said Amelia. "And how strange; it's just about enough to pay off the mortgage and our journey to New York, and a little more. Well, we might buy us bonnets while we are down." She picked up the letter and read it again, and they went on talking till late in the afternoon, and that day no more ironing was done by the Misses Perry.

Gossips in general, and Mrs. Becker's mother in particular, wondered greatly what could take Miss Amelia and Miss Amanda away, and why they did not enlighten their neighbors as to the why and wherefore of their departure.

When at last they returned, each bearing a bandbox and several parcels, as well as their travelling-bags, the mystery deepened. They were evidently in high spirits, and nodded and smiled on all they met. Miss Amelia took the keys out of her pocket and opened the door, and both entered. Everybody saw that, but they saw no more.

When the sisters had taken off their travelling wraps, locked up a large package of banknotes, and tried on their new bonnets, Amanda said:

"I suppose the folks think we are going to disappoint them about those dishes for the fair, and we'd better get them down and wash them. It's Saturday, and we'll have hard work to get them done by night. The fair opens Monday noon, and of course we are not going to break the Sabbath."

Then, arrayed in their wrappers, Amanda and Amelia explored cupboards and pantries, went up into the attic, and down into the cellar, and finally, having piled plates and bowls, cups, saucers and pitchers on tables, chairs and window-sills, until the little kitchen looked like a china-shop, they began to wash and polish them.

"My, how close it is here!" said Miss Amanda, suddenly. "Do raise a window, Mely."

Amelia obeyed, and turned to her sister, laughing.

"Here's the plaid cloak coming," she said.

"Glad to know it for once," said Amanda.

"Yes, I never thought I should be glad to see the McMurtry plaid at the door," said Amelia. "I'll go and get the money."

She ran upstairs, and came down to find Mrs. McMurtry sitting on a chair in the kitchen.

"Yes," the latter was saying, "I heard you'd come home, and I thought I'd call and have a little talk about our troubles. I shall hate to do what I've got to do."

"Yes, I'm really sorry for you," said Amelia, beginning to wipe a dish.

Mrs. McMurtry looked surprised:

"I suppose you feel it is serious, and have done your best?" she said.

"I don't seem to mind much," said Amelia, laughing. "I don't look worried, do I?"

"Now, Mely, don't tease," said Amanda. And Amelia threw her great towel over her arm and dipped her hand into her pocket and drew out a great roll of banknotes.

"You see we've no reason to fret; we can pay you to-day. We've had a legacy, and it just covers what we owe you." She laughed.

"Well, I'm as glad as you are," said Mrs. McMurtry, as Amelia counted out the money and laid it on the table at her elbow. "And I'll run to Lawyer Smith's and get the papers and receipts. Take care, Miss Amelia, take care, you've dropped four notes on the floor—you're real nervous. Arn't you? So am I. You see we are all so pleased. I should have hated to do what I'd have had to." With this she turned to the door, calling back that she would be back at once with the receipt.

The two young women went on washing the dishes and packing them in baskets, laughing as they worked, until they saw the plaid cloak coming again.

"Just caught my lawyer," she said, sinking breathlessly into a chair. "Here's your receipt, Miss Amelia, and now I'll take my money, and thank you too."

"Your money!" said Amanda. "Why, surely you took it, Mrs. McMurtry."

"I laid it on the table at your elbow," said Amelia.

"Why, I wouldn't have carried it off before I gave you the papers," Mrs. McMurtry cried. She plunged her hand into her pocket, she felt in the bosom of her dress, she took off her cloak and shook it. Meanwhile, Amelia searched herself, and Amanda looked all over the room.

"What can you have done with it?" Mrs. McMurtry asked at last.

"I've done nothing," Amelia retorted. "Mrs. McMurtry, you have lost the money on the road or left it at the lawyer's. I'm *sure* you took it."

"Did you see me take it?" asked the old lady. "Can either of you swear to that?"

"I laid it at your elbow," said Amelia.

"Well, let's look again," said Mrs. McMurtry. "We were all real nervous."

And now they searched the house. Went over all the china, lifted tea-pot lids, emptied baskets, turned cream-jugs upside down—Amelia, in her grief and wrath continually declaring that she had paid the money, and that Mrs. McMurtry was to blame for its loss.

At last night fell, and the plaid cloak vanished at the door, the wearer uttering the words:

"I hope you'll find your money, young ladies. I should hate to do what I'll have to do if you don't," as a parting benediction.

"I'm *sure* she carried it off with her, and I believe she *knows* she did," said Amelia.

"Oh, don't say that, Mely," said Amanda. "She's so rich, too. It wouldn't be a temptation."

"I don't know how far a miser's heart will carry one," said Amelia. "Think how long she has worn that plaid cloak. A woman with nobody else to spend money on, never to give herself a new cloak in the memory of grown-up folk!"

"Well, *I* don't think she would steal our money," said Amanda. "And though I was scared at first, I mean to trust Providence. I'm sure it will all come right yet."

Then they packed the china for the fair, hoping to find the bills in every mug and pitcher and teapot, but hoping in vain.

The news of the loss spread rapidly. Miss Amelia posted notices offering a reward to the "honest finder of a roll of fifty-dollar bills," probably lost between her home and Lawyer Smith's office, "by a lady in a plaid cloak."

Mrs. McMurtry resented this. Public opinion was divided. Some said the bills must, in all the washing of china, have gotten into the dishwater or the fire; others, that Mrs. McMurtry had lost them; others still, on whose property she held mortgages, or who had been "sold out" by her, made the same remarks about the plaid cloak and the miser's heart that Amelia Perry had made. Finally the court-house was packed one day to listen to the case of Amelia Perry against Jean McMurtry—the former declaring that she had paid the latter the sum of two thousand five hundred dollars; the latter declaring that though the money was laid upon the table, close to her elbow, she had never touched it.

"I might have taken it up and forgotten," she said; "but never since I was born did I carry money loose in my hand. When I was a child I put my penny in my pocket when I went to buy candy."

While Miss Amelia swore that she laid the money at Mrs. McMurtry's elbow, she could not avow that she saw her pick it up; and Amanda had not seen her do it either.

Lawyer Smith and his clerk swore that Mrs. McMurtry came into the office in a great hurry, to get the necessary papers and receipt, and said: "There's my money lying ready for me on the Perrys' table. It's more than I ever expected, and I should have hated to do what I'd have had to do."

Every one sympathized with the Perrys, but neither of them could swear that she touched the money. Laying it on the table near her was not giving it to her; and shortly it was decided that Mrs. McMurtry had the right to foreclose the mortgage, which was overdue.

While Miss Amanda, who was very pale, pinned a blue veil about the bonnet of Miss Amelia, who was drowned in tears, Mr. Smith turned his attention to his client, who had found her plaid cloak too much for her and had removed it. The garment had fallen to the floor. It was an intricate thing, with sleeves, capes, straps and I know not what, and somehow, in picking it up, Mr. Smith reversed it and laid it over her shoulders upside-down. She, unaware of what had happened, shook it wildly, hoping to settle it, and suddenly a small boy, who had somehow smuggled himself in, shrieked:

"Get on to the money!"

Those nearest stared. A fifty-dollar bill was lying at Mrs. McMurtry's feet. In a moment more a hollow square of court officials had formed about that lady and her

Enameline

The modern ready-to-use stove paste.

A bright gloss in half the time of other polishes. No dust, no dirt, no trouble. See that you get the genuine. All dealers.

lawyer, who was on his knees picking up a vast quantity of fifty-dollar banknotes, all new and crisp and green, that fell mysteriously as a shower of manna upon the court-room floor.

"Two thousand five hundred dollars," he counted at last.

While Mrs. McMurtry tore off her cloak and flung it from her as though its touch were deadly, shrieking:

"There's a rip in the silk facing, and it made a pocket of itself, and me a thief! I *did* pick up the money without thinking, and I put it in there. I wouldn't have done it on purpose for a kingdom. But who'll believe me? Nobody."

"*I* believe you, Mrs. McMurtry," cried Miss Amanda, who, perched on a bench, looked down upon the scene; "and I guess sister Amelia does, too."

"Yes," said Amelia, faintly. "Yes, it's that rip in the cloak facing that's to blame for all."

Meanwhile bursts of laughter came from the midst of the group as Mr. Smith shook out of the plaid cloak, upon the floor, a host of hairpins, cards, letters, a ginger-snap, a photograph; all sorts of small, flat trifles, the accumulation, probably, of several years, which Mrs. McMurtry had put into the rip in the facing instead of her pocket. And finally the court-room was cleared of a laughing crowd, who waited to see the plaid cloak make its appearance.

It waited in vain. Lawyer Smith smuggled his client home through a back door, and the Misses Perry occupied the vacant seats in the queer little wagon.

It was Miss Amanda who told every one, next day, that Mrs. McMurtry had forgiven them the mortgage, and refused to touch the recovered money.

"She says she owes it to herself to do it," said Amanda, "and I guess she is right, though sister Amelia felt proud about it."

As for the plaid cloak, everybody had seen the gardener burn that to tinder before the McMurtry house, and when its former owner once more appeared in public, she wore a new outer garment of plain dark-brown, and ceased forever to be "The Plaid Lady."

◆

—"Mr. Progress, I want you to show me a line of those 'Elfin' watches put out by the Waterbury Watch Company. My wife says she is ashamed of her watch, now that she has seen the dainty and stylish ones the Waterbury people are making."

"Well, I don't wonder at it. They used to make fun of Waterburies, but I declare that in style, size, and shape they are the most artistic made to-day. Every one is warranted in every particular, and the company stands back of its warrant."

"I'll take this little gold one. Engrave her monogram on the back, and send to r to-morrow."

◆

NEW THEORIES IN THE EDUCATION OF BOYS.

In some schools the small boy is required to take a course in sewing just the same as his sister.

There was a little rebellion at this until the boys compromised on making sails for boats, balls, making bits of straps into harness and other useful forms, mending some of their garments and putting on their buttons.

There is no good reason why the boy should not be taught to sew as well as the girl. There are very few men in whose life the necessity for a stitch does not come. To handle a needle skillfully is a great accomplishment, and whether that needle be used for lacing up the tire of a bicycle or for marrying the edges of a ripped glove, the use is there just the same.

If mothers of families would teach their small boys to be handy with the needle, and to be able to offer their services in the thousand and one emergencies where the stitch in time saves nine, they would furnish them with one more weapon with which to fight successfully against any adverse circumstances that might in after life overtake them.

◆

FREE TO BALD HEADS.

The Altenheim Medical Dispensary, Room 103, Selves Building, Cincinnati, Ohio, will mail on application free information regarding how to grow hair, stop falling hair and remove scalp diseases. Send at once. —*a.*

◆

—An Arctic owl, measuring a little more than three feet from tip to tip of its wings, was shot on one of the islands in the harbor of Portland, Me., a few weeks ago.

◆

MODERN POSSIBILITIES.

Science and invention are doing great things. One of the latest achievements is that of a man who delivered a speech in the West while attending to business in the East. A Western Congressman had an engagement at home to deliver an address at a holiday gathering, but Congress did not take a recess at holiday time, therefore the member had to stay. But he dictated his speech to a phonograph and sent the cylinder to Grand Rapids, where his friends listened with delight to the eloquent and dulcet tones of his welcome voice.

FACTS FOR THE TRAVELLER.

There is no more ideal route in all particulars than the Chesapeake and Ohio of to-day. Every one who samples its scenery and service becomes an enthusiastic advertiser, and its fame is multiplying accordingly. The scenery through the Alleghany Mountains and the New River canyons, as viewed from the observation car, affords sublimities of nature nowhere equaled east of the Rocky Mountains. The F. F. V. Limited, its star train, which runs solid between New York and Cincinnati, via Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington, with Louisville sleeper attached, is without a rival in those details which contribute to the sum of pleasure and comfort. A track, rock-ballasted and laid with heavy steel rails; bridges and culverts built of iron and stone; splendid new equipment, and the best block system known, assure almost absolute safety in the running of trains. Travellers between the East and the West will make no mistake in asking for tickets via the C. & O. Route. —*a.*

◆

ROBERT BONNER'S SONS,

Booksellers and News Agents.

We hereby announce that we have opened a News and Periodical Department, where we will have on sale the daily and weekly papers, and also the regular monthly magazines.

If any of our readers are not able to procure in their vicinity back numbers of magazines, or special editions of books that may be out of print, in fact anything in the news and periodical line not generally found in the small towns throughout the country, we will be ready to furnish them.

Address ROBERT BONNER'S SONS,
Periodical Department,
25 Spruce Street, New York City.

FREE TO BALD HEADS. We will mail on application, free information how to grow hair upon a bald head, stop falling hair and remove scalp diseases. Address, **Altenheim Medical Dispensary,** Room 103 Selves Building, Cincinnati, O.

ASTHMA CURED DR. TAFT'S ASTHMALENE never fails; send us your address. We will mail trial bottle **FREE.** **The Dr. Taft Bros. M. Co., Rochester, N. Y.**

WANTED PARTY to buy farm here in my locality for the purpose of going into live stock business. It is positively a safe investment for a man with ready capital. No triflers need apply. Address or call on **S. H. NULL, Box 332 West Grove, Pa.**

$22,000 How agent earned. Free outfit to pushing men. **Bone Mills, P. O. 1371, N. Y.**

LADIES **I MAKE BIG WAGES** doing pleasant home work, and will gladly send full particulars to all sending 2c. stamp. **MISS M. B. STEBBINS, LAWRENCE, MICH.**

PATENTS **PATTISON & NESBIT, Wash., D. C.** Advice as to patentability and Inventors' Guide free.

Agents Make from $50. to $500. a month at home or traveling. Work for young and old. Don't rely on others. Earn your own living. Outfit furnished free. Get to work at once. CHICAGO SCALE CO. Chicago

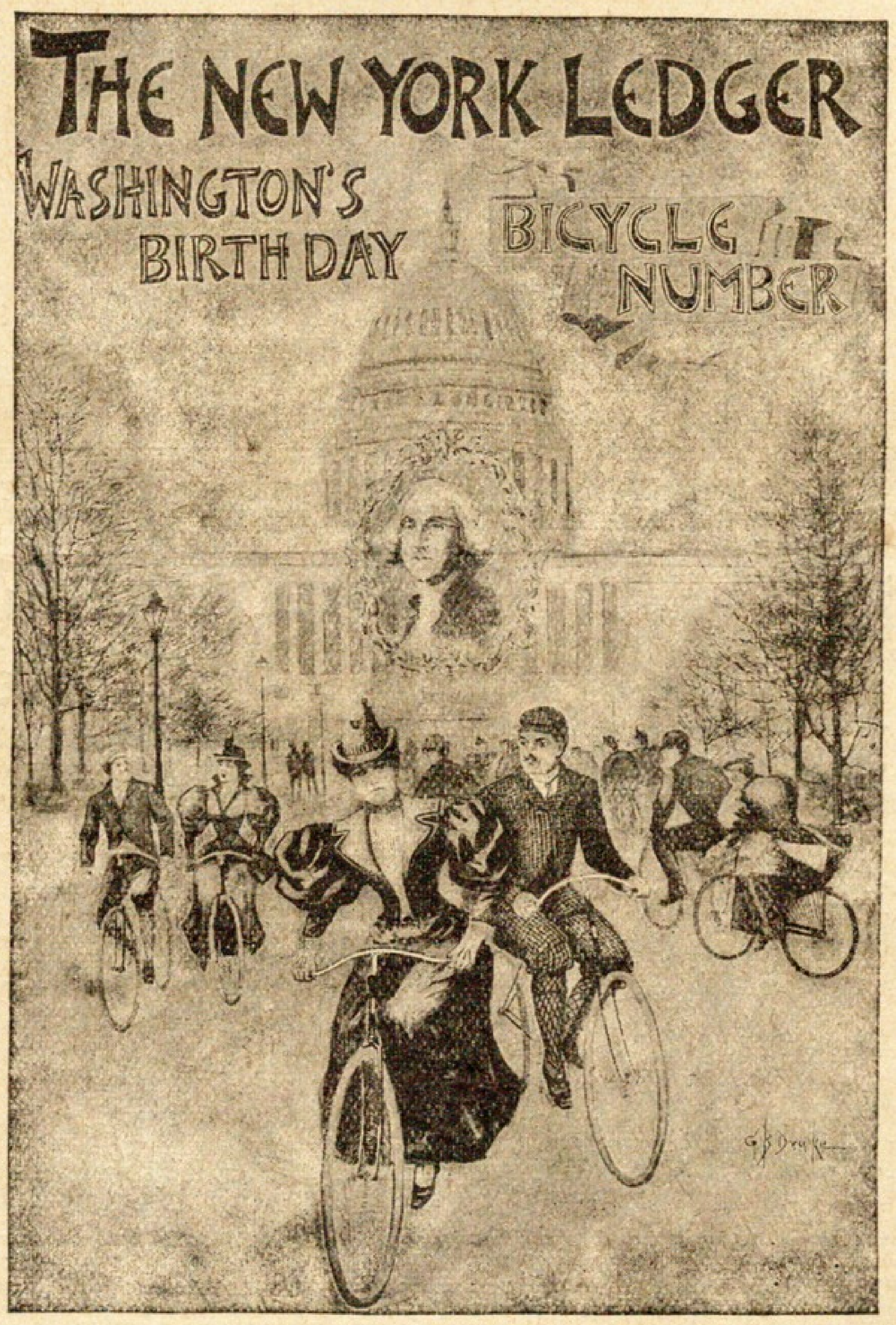
SHORTHAND taught by mail. Situations procured. **W. G. CHAFFEE, Oswego, N. Y.**

TOWEL RACK.

Nickel-plated and polished Brackets and Rod, 18 inches wide. Sent, prepaid, for 30 cents.

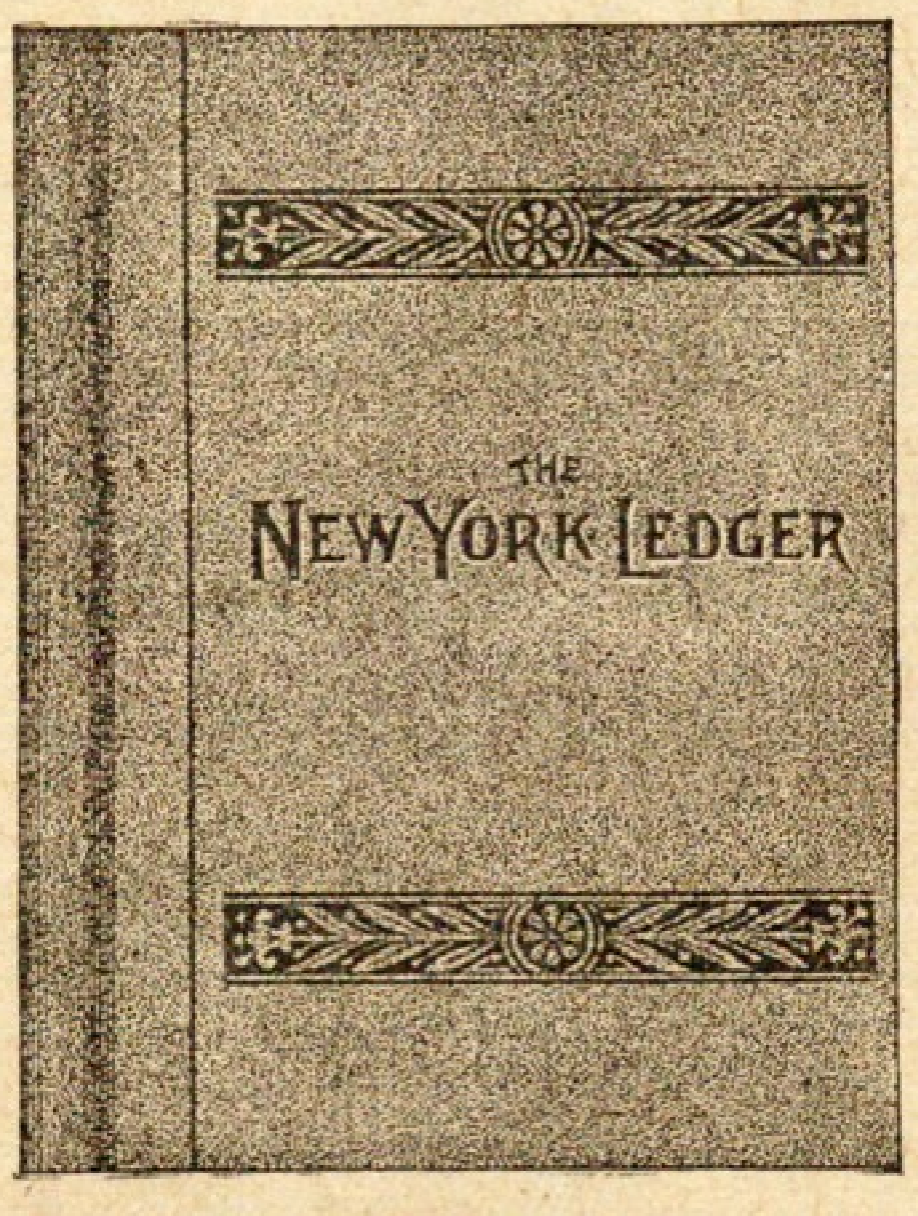
DONOHUE & MORAND, 21 Arlington Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.

Next Week's Issue



Will Contain a Number of Interesting Bicycle Stories and Articles.

The Ledger Binder Holds 52 Numbers.



The great variety in the contents and the artistic excellence of the *Ledger* have created a large demand for this means of preserving the paper.

Preserves them better for present use. Keeps them for the future. Increases their value year by year.

THE LEDGER BINDER

IS SIMPLE BUT SURE.

No. 1 has stiff Cloth Covers. Embossed, Gilt title, 12 x 17 inches in size. Will hold 52 numbers of the *Ledger*. **Price, postage paid, 65 cents.**

No. 2 is made with Heavy Manilla Covers, handsomely printed in maroon. Cloth back. **Price, postage paid, 35 cents; or two for 60 cents.** Address all orders to

ROBERT BONNER'S SONS, Publishers,
Cor. William and Spruce Sts., New York.

A WATCH FREE

— TO —

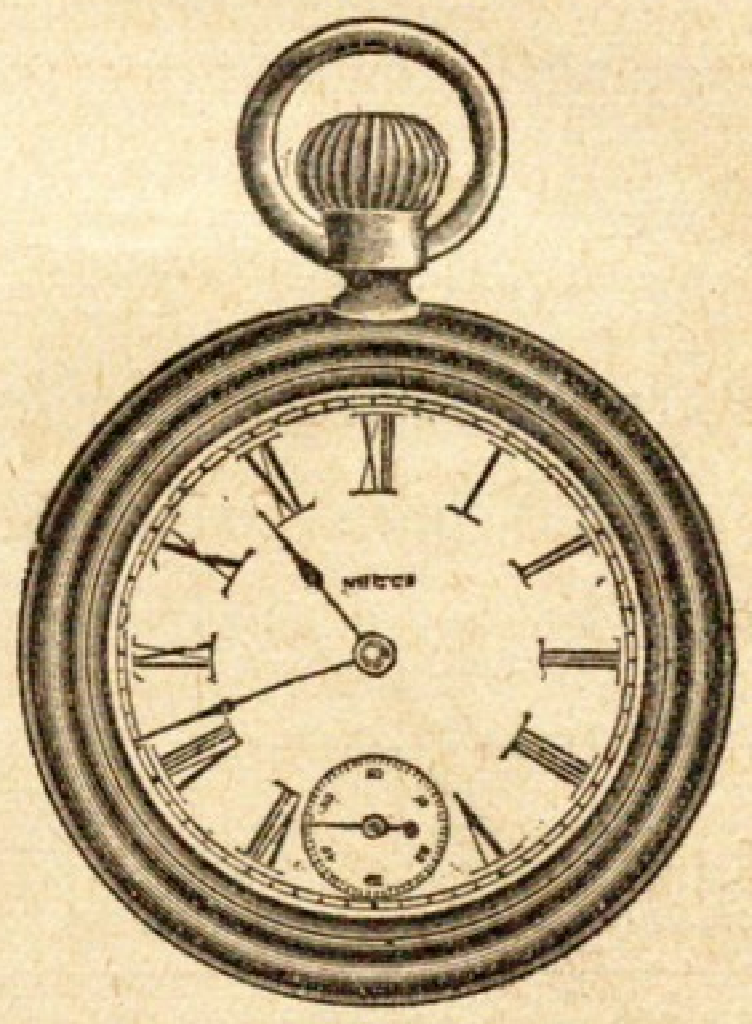
Boys and Girls.

The proprietors of the **New York Ledger** hereby offer to give, free of all cost, to any boy or girl who will sell

10 New York Ledgers

each week for 20 weeks the watch described below. If any boy or girl does not want to wait 20 weeks to get this watch, it can be secured by selling **20 Ledgers for 10 Weeks,** that is, averaging a sale of 20 copies for 10 weeks.

Free to Boys and Girls.



This watch is not a toy or sun-dial, but a serviceable timepiece, guaranteed by the manufacturer to be accurate and durable, which guarantee is assumed by us. It is a stem-winder and stem-setter, and comes in either a gilt or a nickel case, according to choice. It is sent securely packed, and in the box we place a serviceable chain. In the times of our grandfathers, such a watch, even if it could have been made, would have cost a considerable sum of money. This watch is not for sale, but is sent free, post-paid, as a gift to every boy and girl who sells the number of copies of the New York *Ledger* required by the above offer, namely, an average of 10 copies for 20 weeks, or an average of 20 copies for 10 weeks.

WANTED

Bright Boys and Girls

— TO —

Sell the New York Ledger Every Week.

Big Pay for Little Work.

The New York *Ledger* has had so many applications from boys and girls throughout the country wanting to sell the *Ledger* by the week, as well as by subscription for the year, we have decided to establish wide-awake young agents in every town in the country.

We Want an Active Worker in Every Place.

Hundreds of smart boys and girls in every locality have several hours' spare time each week.

Read Our Plan.

We want just such ones to work for us a little while every week selling *Ledgers* at 5 cents each—selling the old, reliable, original and best story paper published—the New York *Ledger*.

No Possible Risk.

Our young agents take no possible risk. We send a bundle of *Ledgers* every week, and they sell them like hot cakes at 5 cents each. Every one wants the New York *Ledger* as soon as given an opportunity to examine and read a copy of it.

The Ledger Free.

If the postmaster or any responsible party will send us the name of a smart boy or girl to sell the *Ledger* every week in his town, we will put an extra *Ledger* in the agent's bundle each week, to be delivered free to the party appointing the agent so long as the agent sells the *Ledger*.

Send us the name of a smart boy or girl at once. Have them fill out the coupon below and send it at once:

.............................189

I hereby agree to act from date as agent for the New York *Ledger*, and to sell the same to ladies, farmers and others at 5 cents a copy every week, and that I will report not later than the Monday after each package is received, on blank furnished me, and remit 3 cents for each copy I sell or deliver to subscribers, and will keep all unsold copies, to be returned as instructed.

Name.................................

Address..............................

State................................

How many papers first week...........

Appointed by.........................

Address NEW YORK LEDGER,
182 William Street, New York.

IVORY

IVORY

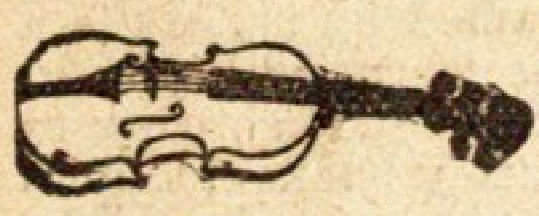
SOAP

Chapping is caused by the removal of oil which is necessary to keep the skin supple. Those who suffer from this cause should use only a mild pure soap like the Ivory.

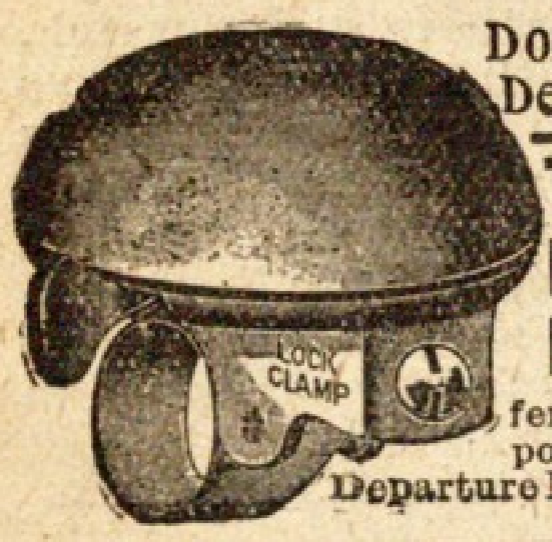
THE PROCTER & GAMBLE CO., CIN'TI.

Brass Band Instruments, Drums, Uniforms and all Equipments. Send stamp for catalogue, 400 illustrations. Lyon & Healy, Chicago.

BICYCLES 400 Fine Second-Hand Wheels must be closed out. Agents wanted. Send for list. D. G. Mead & Prentiss, Chicago, Ill.



SEND for Catalogue of the Musical Instrument you think of buying. Violins repaired by the Cremona System. C. STORY, 26 Central St., Boston, Mass.



Don't you hear dem bells
Dey's ringin' ev'rywhere

THE NEW DEPARTURE BELLS... Are the standard of excellence the world over. Made in 16 different styles and prices. Send postal for booklet to The New Departure Bell Co., Bristol, Conn., U.S.A.

$100 BICYCLE FREE. $100

In order to introduce our matchless EMPRESS, 1896, wheel, we will ship free of charges to any part of the United States one of our famous $100 bicycles to each of the three persons obtaining the greatest number of words out of letters contained in "THE EMPRESS BICYCLE COMPANY."

For conditions of competition send stamped addressed envelope to

EMPRESS BICYCLE COMPANY,
Room 605, 79 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

On a False Charge

By Seward W. Hopkins,

Author of "Two Gentlemen of Hawaii," "In the China Sea," "Jack Robbins of America," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY H. M. EATON.

12mo. 340 Pages. Handsomely Bound in Cloth. Price, $1.00. Paper Cover, 50 Cents.

"On a False Charge" is an exciting story of the great strike in the Pennsylvania coal mines, setting forth thrilling scenes and incidents and showing how the mining population are often the victims of unscrupulous and grasping agents. The facts of this story are true to life, and the scenes portrayed are taken directly from nature. The romantic interest which centers in the heroine is unsurpassed in any recent American work of fiction. Mr. Hopkins has a lively and entertaining style, and his book is one that will please every reader of his former novels.

Florence Warden's New Novel.

The Mystery of the
Inn by the Shore

By Florence Warden,

Author of "The House on the Marsh," etc.

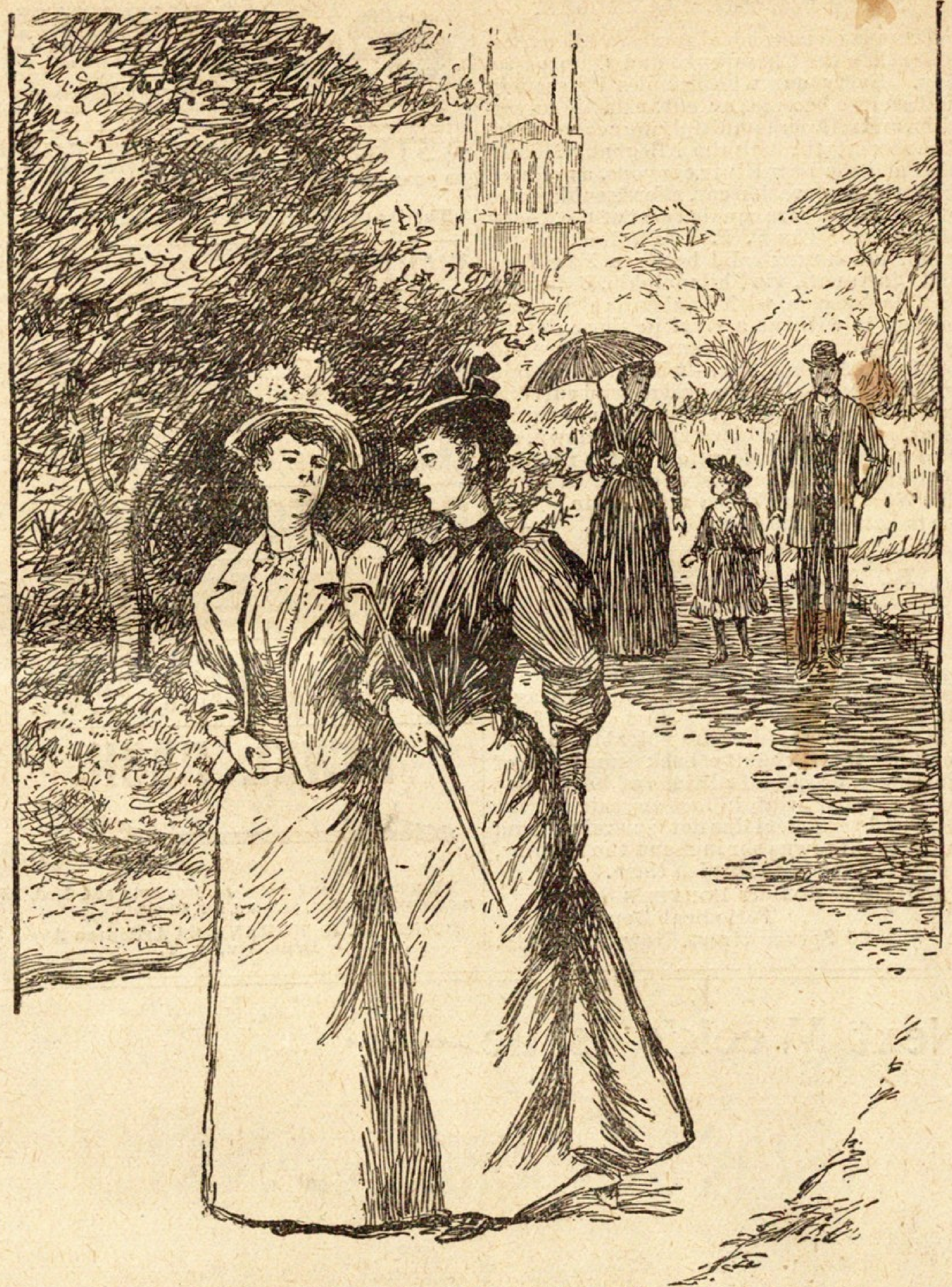
ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES KENDRICK.

12mo. 314 Pages. Handsomely Bound in Cloth. Price, $1.00. Paper Cover, 50 Cents.

This is the $1,000 prize story recently published in the New York *Ledger*, and now reissued in book form. The story was a great success as a serial, and we do not doubt will be popular in book form. It is a good novel from beginning to end. The mystery is preserved so well that it is almost impossible to divine, with any degree of certainty, how the story will come out until the conclusion is reached. When published in the *Ledger* there were over one hundred thousand competing answers for the cash prizes, and the answers indicated a great body of interested and intelligent readers.

For sale by all booksellers and newsdealers, or sent, postpaid, on receipt of price, by the publishers,

ROBERT BONNER'S SONS,
Cor. William and Spruce Sts., New York.



A DOUBTFUL MALADY.

NANETTE: The minister looked very pale, didn't he? I was told he had some organic trouble.

MARION: That's so. Mrs. Hersomuch said only yesterday that he was worried by the style of Mr. Playlivly's voluntaries.

If you want a sure relief for pains in the back, side, chest, or limbs, use an

Allcock's Porous Plaster

BEAR IN MIND—Not one of the host of counterfeits and imitations is as good as the genuine.

HALF NICKEL FRONT FORK

Waverley BICYCLES.

ARE THE CHOICE OF EXPERIENCED RIDERS,

Those who have learned to know the difference between a wheel that actually is high grade, and one that is simply claimed to be. Others may be good, but the Waverley is the **Highest of all High Grades.**

REWARD of a new Waverley Scorcher is offered to each person who recovers a stolen '96 Waverley during 1896, payable upon presentation to us of satisfactory proof of the facts and the sentence of the thief. This reward is open to every one excepting the owner of the stolen wheel, but is not payable to more than one person in any case.

ART CATALOGUE FREE BY MAIL. INDIANA BICYCLE CO., INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

"FOOL'S HASTE IS NAE SPEED." DON'T HURRY THE WORK UNLESS YOU USE

SAPOLIO

FAT MADE LEAN

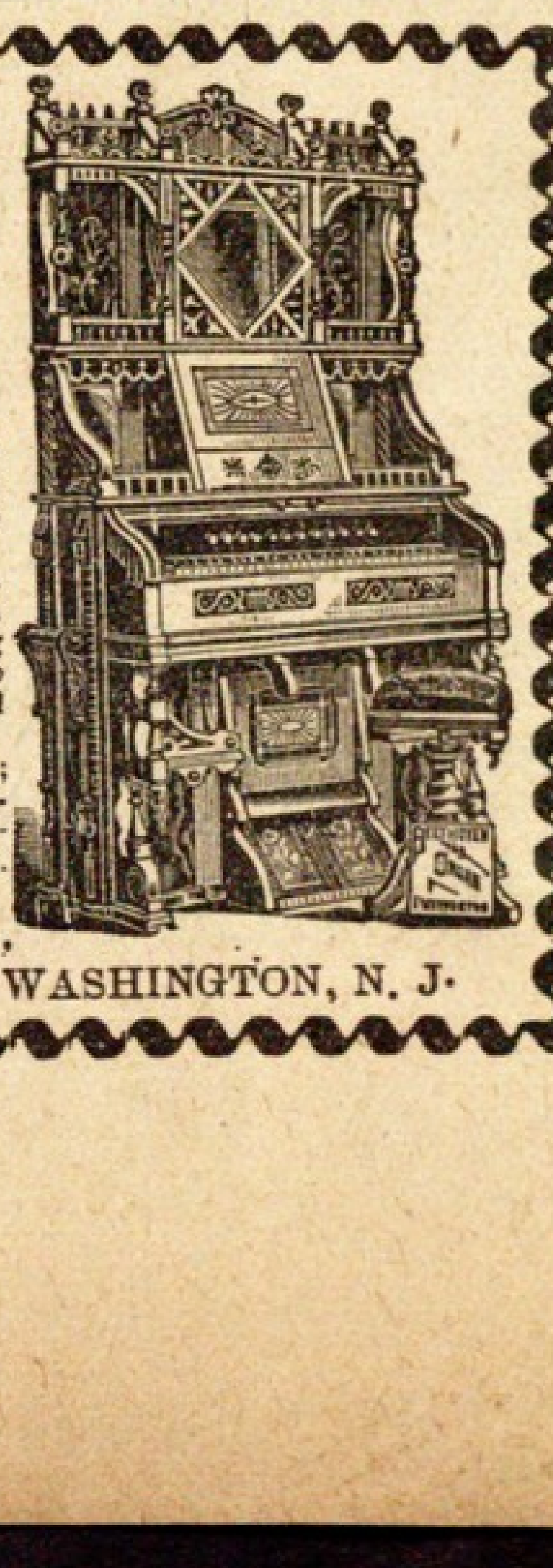
CORPUS LEAN

Will reduce fat at rate of 10 to 15 lbs. per month without **injury to health.** Send 6c. in stamps for sealed circulars covering testimonials. **L.E. Marsh Co.** **2315 Madison Sq., Philada., Pa.**

ABSOLUTELY HARMLESS.

Simply **stopping** the **fat** producing effects of food. The supply being stopped, the natural working of the system draws on the fat and *reduces weight* **at once.**

Sold by all Druggists.



CATALOGUE

FREE

Now is the time to buy a **PIANO** or **ORGAN** from the largest manufacturers in the world, who sell their instruments direct to the public at wholesale factory prices.

DON'T PAY a profit to agents and middlemen.

TERMS to suit all. No money asked in advance. Privilege of testing organ or piano in your own home 30 days. No expense to you if not satisfactory. Warranted 25 years.

REFERENCE Bank references furnished on application; the editor of this paper; any business man of this town, and to the thousands using our instruments in their homes. A book of testimonials sent with every catalogue. As an advertisement we will sell the first Piano in a place for only **$159.** Organs from **$25** upwards. Stool, Book, &c., **FREE.**

If you want to buy for cash,
If you want to buy on instalments,
BUT DON'T BUY UNTIL YOU **Write Us.** BEETHOVEN PIANO & ORGAN CO.,
P. O. Box 824, WASHINGTON, N. J.

The Cough Which Lingers

because of a run-down condition of the system, and is not affected by ordinary cough medicines, will yield readily to

SCOTT'S EMULSION

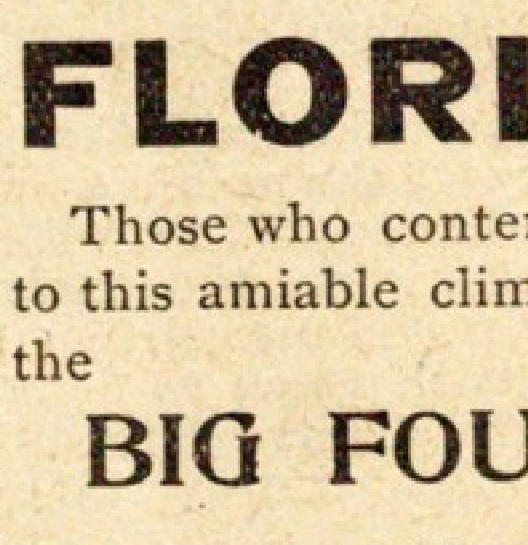
because it gives strength to the weakened body and enables it to throw off disease.

50 cents and $1.00 at all druggists

SCOTT & BOWNE
Manufacturing Chemists, New York

Erie Bicycles
Have Won Popularity.
Erie Bicycles
Scientific Model.
Erie Bicycles $75
Absolutely Guaranteed.
Erie Bicycles *Send for Catalogue.*
QUEEN CITY CYCLE CO., Buffalo, N.Y.

MANUSCRIPTS WANTED. We pay spot cash for all classes of mss., including many often declined by ordinary publishers. Particulars for stamp. **LITERARY PRESS AGENCY, So. Haven, Mich.**



Beeman's— THE ORIGINAL Pepsin Gum

CAUTION.—See that the name Beeman is on each wrapper.

The Perfection of Chewing Gum

And a Delicious Remedy for Indigestion and Sea Sickness.

Send 5c. for sample package.

Beeman Chemical Co.
113 Lake St., Cleveland, O.
Originators of
Pepsin Chewing Gum.

A FEW FACTS.

FLORIDA.

Those who contemplate a winter's trip to this amiable climate will bear in mind the

BIG FOUR ROUTE

is the "Best Line" geographically and substantially from all points East, Northeast, North, Northwest and West. Solid trains of magnificent Wagner Buffet Sleeping Cars, Buffet Parlor Cars, elegant Coaches and Dining Cars daily from New York, Boston, Buffalo, Cleveland, Columbus, Sandusky, Chicago, St. Louis, Peoria, Indianapolis and intermediate points to Cincinnati, where direct connection is made in Central Union Station without transfer across the city, with Through Trains of Pullman Sleeping Cars to Jacksonville, via the Queen & Crescent Route and Louisville & Nashville Railway.

For full particulars call on Agent "Big Four Route" or address

E. O. McCORMICK, Pass. Traffic Mgr.
D. B. MARTIN, Gen'l Pass & Ticket Agt.

In writing to Advertisers, you will find it to your advantage to mention that you saw the Advertisement in the NEW YORK LEDGER.